

Shifting Power

I shall never, under any circumstances, agree to a representative form of government because I consider it harmful to the people whom God has entrusted to my care.

—Russian Tsar Nicholas II (1905)

Essential Question: How did internal and external factors contribute to change in various states after 1900?

An intense period of rebellion continued into the early 1900s. Nicholas II, the last Russian tsar, clearly did not understand the force of the political opposition to his rule that resulted in his assassination in 1918. In the 20th century's first two decades, rebellions erupted against long-standing authoritarian governments in Russia, China, and Mexico. Revolutionaries unseated ruling governments in each country, challenging the existing political and social order and instituting their own political philosophies and practices. Established land-based and maritime empires collapsed under pressure from internal and external forces. By the end of the century, a new global order had emerged.

Revolution in Russia

By the early 20th century, Russia was falling behind most of Europe, the United States, and Japan in wealth in power.

Russia's most obvious challenges were internal. While governments in other industrializing states in the 19th century were actively promoting economic growth, Russia was not. It was slow to expand education for peasants, build roads and other parts of its transportation networks, and support entrepreneurs with loans and contracts. Further, the tsarist government resisted calls for political reform. It did was reluctant to recognize civil liberties and to allow more citizens to participate in government.

These internal problems led to external ones. Without a strong economic base to support a military, Russia then became weaker in international affairs:

- It lost the Crimean War (1853–1856) against the Ottoman Empire,, which was supported by Great Britain and France.
- It lost the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905) in a battle for power in East Asia.

In the fall of 1917, the **Bolsheviks**, an organization representing the revolutionary working class of Russia under the leadership of Vladimir Lenin, seized power and set up a communist government with Lenin at its head. The **communists** believed that workers eventually should own the means of production and that collective ownership would lead to collective prosperity and a just society. Toward that long-term goal, the Soviet government abolished private trade, distributed peasants' crops to feed urban workers, and took over ownership of the country's factories and heavy industries (see Topic 7.4)

Key Events Leading to Revolution in Russia	
Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bloody Sunday, January 22, 1905: Thousands of workers marched peacefully to petition the tsar asking for better working conditions, higher wages, and universal suffrage. The tsar's troops and police began shooting. About 1,300 marchers were killed. • The Revolution of 1905: In strikes responding to Bloody Sunday, 400,000 workers refused to work. The tsar tried to appease the protesters. However, by the end, thousands of workers had been killed, injured, or exiled.
External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905): Russia and Japan both wanted to expand their influence in Korea and Manchuria. Japan won easily, the first time in modern history that an East Asian state had defeated a European power. • World War I: Germany declared war on Russia in 1914. Russians quickly realized how poorly trained and armed their troops were. Civilians suffered from extreme food shortages.

The success of the Bolsheviks in taking power shook the world. They were the first example of communists running a large country. Throughout the capitalist world, from Europe to the United States to Japan, people worried that communists were a danger to their governments as well. The conflict between communism and capitalism would become an important issue shaping world affairs in the rest of the 20th century.

Upheaval in China

China was another land-based empire that collapsed in this period from problems it faced at home and from other countries. The Qing Dynasty had come to power in China in 1644. Finally, a revolution overthrew it in 1911, creating a republic led first by Dr. **Sun Yat-sen**. However, his rule was short.

Internal Challenges China faced daunting domestic concerns in the 19th century, each of which weakened support for the government. One of these was ethnic tension. China consisted of dozens of ethnic groups. The largest group was the Han. The rulers of the Qing Dynasty were Manchus, from a region northeast of China. Many Chinese, particularly the Han, never fully accepted the Qing as legitimate rulers of China. By the late 19th century, the Qing had ruled China for over two centuries, but they had remained ethnically distinct.

A second problem was the constant danger of famine. China experienced rapid population growth between the mid-1700s and mid-1800s, but could not expand the amount of farmland or productivity rapidly enough to provide a stable food supply. Any natural disaster, such as a drought or a flood, could result in the early deaths of thousands of people.

Third, government revenues were very low. The imperial government had not updated the tax system to adjust to changes in the economy. As a result, compared to Europe or the United States, taxes in China were low. This meant that the government did not have the resources to maintain roads, bridges, and irrigation canals.

External Challenges China had been one of the wealthiest, most powerful, most innovative states in the world for much of its recorded history. However, starting in the late 18th century, it faced growing threats to its position by industrialization in Europe. In the late 18th century, Europeans interested in the Chinese market could trade only in the city of Canton (Guangzhou). Europeans commonly bought tea, rhubarb, porcelain, and silk. In Europe, Chinese fashions, table settings, and art objects were very popular. The Chinese received European silver in exchange for they sold. However, the Chinese did not desire the products Europeans produced, and they looked down on Europeans as violent and less civilized. In response to growing European influence in China, many Chinese did rally behind the empress in the 1890s.

Chinese Republic However the desire to support the empress against foreign pressure was not enough to save the Qing Dynasty. In 1911, the last Chinese dynasty was overthrown by a revolutionary movement led by Sun Yat-sen. Though a Christian, Sun believed that China should continued to follow such Confucian principles as loyalty, respect for ancestors, and efforts to promote social harmony. He combined these traditions with ideas he later elaborated upon in his book *The Three People's Principles*:

- **Democracy:** Sun believed in sovereignty, not for all the people but for those Chinese who were “able.” In Confucian terms, this meant a country governed by active and pragmatic experts in the name of the people. He felt that expelling foreign capitalists from China would enable China to redistribute revenues from land taxes more fairly, since the revenues would not have to be used to pay debts to foreigners.
- **Nationalism:** Sun advocated patriotism and loyalty, primarily to central authority.
- **Livelihood:** Sun wanted to end the extreme unequal distribution of wealth in China and the harsh economic exploitation.

Sun Yat-sen's Legacy Sun never had enough military strength to rule all of China. Various warlords controlled the majority of the country. Sun recognized the weakness of his position. After two months in office, he gave up his position to a military leader.

The party Sun led, the Chinese Nationalist Party, or Kuomintang, would later regain power. It would rule China for two decades before losing a civil war with Chinese Communists (see Topic 7.5). While both the Kuomintang and the Communists would honor Sun as the founder of the Chinese republic, neither would fully implement his principles.

Self-Determination in the Ottoman Collapse

By the beginning of the 20th century, the once-mighty Ottoman Empire—now “the sick man of Europe”—had relatively few exports and a waning agricultural economy. The empire relied mostly upon its position as a trade center. Egypt, by contrast, continued to make profits from cotton.

The Young Turks As Ottoman prosperity declined, a group of reformers known as the **Young Turks** emerged. They advocated for a constitution like those of the European states. They also advocated **Turkification**, an effort to make all citizens of the multiethnic empire identify with Turkish culture, which was heavily Islamic. For the millions of Armenians in the empire, who were mostly Christians, this was difficult. In response, some Young Turks scapegoated, or unfairly blamed, Armenians for the empire’s economic problems. (Connect: Compare the cultural assimilation forced on Armenians to that forced on American Indians. See Topic 6.3.)

Fight Against Foreign Influence Turks resented many Europeans, particularly the British and the French, for their economic policies. Foreign investments had given Europeans undue power in the empire. Further, Europeans had imposed trade privileges that were unprofitable for the Ottomans. Because of these resentments, the Ottoman Empire secretly allied with Germany in World War I. (See Topic 7.2.) After Germany’s defeat in World War I, the Ottoman Empire was dismantled by the victorious powers. It was replaced by a smaller nation-state, the Republic of Turkey, and several independent countries.

Victorious Allied forces immediately sent troops to occupy Anatolia. Although the sultan of the Ottoman Empire remained on his throne, he had little power. He served as a mere puppet for British forces that hoped to control the lands of the former empire.

The Rise of Atatürk During the war, a group called the Turkish National Movement organized an army to fight for self-determination. Led by **Mustafa Kemal**, the Turkish Nationalists defeated British and other forces in 1921. The Republic of Turkey was established in 1923, with Kemal as the first president. The new national assembly awarded him the surname **Atatürk** (“father of the Turks”) in recognition of his role in establishing the new republic.

Atatürk’s policies focused on reforming Turkey to make it more like the Western democracies. He was determined to create a secular nation, not one with strong Islamic influences. He implemented several reforms: establishing public education for boys and girls, abolishing polygyny, and expanding

suffrage to include women. As a symbolic gesture, he wore mainly Western suits and hats and encouraged others to do the same. Despite his reforms, he ruled as a dictator for 15 years. He did not give up power before his death in 1938.

Power Shifts in Mexico

Mexico entered the 20th century as an independent nation firmly under the control of a dictator, **Porfirio Díaz**. He oversaw a period of stability and some economic progress. However, he had allowed foreign investors, particularly those from the United States, control over many of the country's resources. Additionally, the wealthiest 1 percent of the population controlled 97 percent of the land. Typical Mexican peasants were landless.

Revolution In 1910, Díaz jailed **Francisco Madero**, the opposition candidate for president. This act, combined with the growing opposition to Díaz's strong-armed policies, accommodation to foreign powers, and opposition to land reform, ignited the **Mexican Revolution**. Madero escaped and set up revolutionary offices in El Paso, Texas. Then, in 1911, Madero's troops, under the command of **Francisco "Pancho" Villa**, defeated Mexican troops, sending Díaz into exile. One revolutionary leader, **Emiliano Zapata**, began the actual process of redistributing land to impoverished peasants.

Until 1920, Mexico suffered from political instability and devastating violence. Between 1910 and 1920, conflict resulted in around 2 million deaths, out of a population of around 15 million people. Political violence continued for another decade. However, two results came out of conflicts between 1910 and 1930 that provided Mexico with stability for the rest of the century:

- Mexico adopted a new constitution in 1917. It included the goals of land redistribution, universal suffrage, and public education. These principles continued to guide Mexico's government.
- The **Institutional Revolutionary Party**, or **PRI**, was formed in 1929. Though widely criticized as corrupt, the PRI dominated Mexican politics. Until 2000, all presidents were PRI members.

KEY TERMS BY THEME

CULTURE: Ethnic Conflict
Turkification

GOVERNMENT: Politics
Bolshevik
communists

Young Turks
Mexican Revolution
Institutional Revolutionary
Party (PRI)

GOVERNMENT: Leaders
Sun Yat-sen
Kemal Atatürk
Porfirio Díaz
Francisco Madero
Francisco "Pancho" Villa
Emiliano Zapata

Causes of World War I

The next great European war will probably come out of some damned foolish thing in the Balkans.

—German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck (1888)

Essential Question: What were the causes and consequences of World War I?

In the years before World War I, social and political developments, including shifting powers, contributed to the escalation of tensions that resulted in global conflict. European nations, expanding their empires, competed for raw material resources in Africa and Asia. A series of mutual alliances created entanglements that committed nations to defense systems that would draw them into war. Arms races involving Germany, Great Britain, and Russia gave military establishments great influence.

The immediate cause of the war's outbreak had its roots in yet another cause of conflict—a rising wave of nationalism. As Bismarck predicted, this clash erupted in the Balkans when Serbian nationalists, protesting Austria-Hungary's control over the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina, assassinated Austro-Hungarian **Archduke Franz Ferdinand**. Thus World War I began.

Immediate Causes of the Great War

World War I, which lasted from 1914 to 1918, was known as the **Great War**—not because of its positive nature, but because of the immense scale of the fighting. No previous war had involved as many nations from different parts of the world or killed as many soldiers *and* civilians. However, World War I did more than create an enormous body count. It fundamentally weakened the Western European powers, thus encouraging the growth of nationalism and appeals for self-rule within European colonies in Asia and Africa. Treaties signed at the end of this war helped set the stage for World War II. World War I was one of the most significant events of the 20th century.

A long series of events led up to World War I. The immediate cause was the assassination by **Gavrilo Princip** of **Archduke Franz Ferdinand**, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, and his wife, Sophie, on June 28, 1914. Princip, a Serbian, was a member of the **Black Hand**, a nationalist



Source: Wikimedia Commons

The arrest of Gavrilo Princip after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife in Sarajevo, Bosnia, June 28, 1914.

organization devoted to ending Austro-Hungarian presence in the Balkans. From the Austro-Hungarian perspective, however, the Black Hand was a terrorist group.

Immediately after the assassinations, Austria-Hungary sent an ultimatum to the Serbian government, demanding that it end all anti-Austrian agitation in Serbia. When the Serbian government rejected the ultimatum, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on July 28, 1914. Austria-Hungary looked to its ally Germany, a stronger nation with more firepower, for military assistance to punish Serbia. Serbia, populated by ethnic Slavs, looked to other Slavic countries, particularly Russia, for help. On August 1, Germany declared war on Russia, and two days later on France. The following day, Britain declared war on Germany, and on August 6 Austria declared war on Russia. By the end of August 1914, Japan's entrance into the conflict changed a relatively minor incident into a true world war.

Long-Term Causes of the Great War

Princip's actions were not the sole cause of World War I. Tensions in Europe had been simmering for decades. One way to remember the sources of these tensions is with the acronym MAIN: Militarism, Alliances, Imperialism, and Nationalism.

Militarism Defined as aggressive military preparedness, **militarism** celebrates war and the armed forces. European powers had been competing for dominance; one way to prove their strength was to invest in the military. Great



Britain and Germany in particular spent a great deal of money on building up their armies and navies, heavily recruiting young men to join their armed forces and building more ships and amassing other military hardware. Because of the Industrial Revolution, it was possible to mass-produce weapons and supplies. A nation's militaristic attitude influenced its public to view war as a festive competition, more like a game than a gravely serious matter. "Everybody said, 'It'll be over by Christmas,'" a British soldier named Bill Haine recalled.

Alliances In their quest for power, European nations also formed **secret alliances**—groups whose members secretly agree to protect and help one another when attacked. When one member of an alliance was attacked in any way, the other members were expected to stand up for that particular member. This system explains why Russia and Germany were ready to jump into the conflict between Serbia and Austria-Hungary.

Furthermore, countries that were allied with other countries were also sworn enemies of members of other alliances. For example, Britain and France were allies with Russia in the alliance called the **Triple Entente**, and all three viewed Germany as a rival—for different reasons. France was bitter about its defeat in the Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871) and the loss to Germany of Alsace-Lorraine, a major industrial region with rich deposits of iron ore. Both Britain and France competed with Germany for colonies in Africa. After the war began, the Triple Entente became known as the **Allies** as they were joined by Italy, Japan, China, the United States, and other countries. By the end of the war, there were a total of 27 Allies and "Associated Powers."

The Allies' rival alliance before the war was known as the **Triple Alliance**, composed of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy. However, when the war began, Italy remained neutral until 1915, when it switched its allegiance and joined the Allies. At the outbreak of the war, the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria joined the former Triple Alliance, which was now called the **Central Powers**.

World War I Alliances		
Allied Powers	Central Powers	Neutral States
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• France• Great Britain• Russia• Italy• Portugal• Romania• Serbia• Greece	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Germany• Austria-Hungary• Ottoman Empire• Bulgaria	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spain• Norway• Sweden• Denmark• Netherlands• Switzerland• Albania

Imperialism The alliance system developed largely because Western European countries became bitter rivals for global domination. One of the most important ways these nations could assert their power and generate wealth was to own overseas colonies. During the latter half of the 19th century, for example, Western European countries scrambled for any available land in Africa to add to the colonies they already owned in Asia, the Americas, and the Pacific. Once European powers had claimed nearly all the land in Africa, they began fighting with one another over colonies. Thus, imperialism was a driving force behind tensions in Europe leading up to the archduke's assassination. (Connect: Describe the development of imperialism and how it could have led to the tensions of the early 20th century. See Topic 6.2.)

Nationalism The assassination of the archduke in June 1914, the immediate cause of war, illustrates the growth of nationalism, the final long-term cause of the Great War. On a basic level, nationalism originates from a feeling of pride in one's national identity. Multinational empires such as the Ottoman Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire had to contend with different nationalist movements among their subject peoples. Serbs like Princip wanted to rid their land of Austro-Hungarian domination, and Arabs were tired of the limitations the Ottoman Empire imposed on them. Both groups sought **self-determination**—the idea that peoples of the same ethnicity, language, culture, and political ideals should be united and should have the right to form an independent nation-state. Militant nationalists among Serbs and Arabs fought for the Allies, thus extending the boundaries of the Great War.

Consequences of the Great War

As the 20th century began, most Europeans looked forward to a bright future. They expected a century of peace guaranteed by alliances, prosperity as a result of their colonial empires, and continued progress. All of that optimism was shattered on one fateful day in 1914.

Virtually every major event during the remainder of the 20th century was a direct or indirect result of World War I. The war led to the downfalls of four monarchies: Russia, Austria-Hungary, Germany, and the Ottoman Empire. It redrew the maps of Europe and the Middle East with the disintegration of Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires. Germany lost all its overseas colonies to various Allied nations, and the former Ottoman provinces of Iraq, Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon came under the control of Britain and France. But the war also led to the beginning of the end of colonialism.

New technologies made World War I the deadliest and most destructive war in human history. It disrupted European economies and had profound social consequences, including the rise of communism and fascism, colonial revolts, and genocide. There was a massive shift of power from Europe to the United States.



Source: National Library of New Zealand
New Zealand Rifle Brigade, fighting with the Allies, near the front during World War I. Helmeted soldiers prepare meals in cramped conditions. Much of World War I was fought in trenches, where soldiers could take cover from enemy fire. Photo taken near Gommecourt, France, July 25, 1918.

Germany was furious about the terms of the peace treaty. Germany was forced to take full blame for the war—although Austria-Hungary started it—and forced to agree to make reparations, impossibly large payments to its opponents to make up for their losses. The war that was to make the world safe for democracy instead gave rise to authoritarian regimes and an even greater world war.

KEY TERMS BY THEME		
GOVERNMENT: Wars and Rebellions Great War Gavrilo Princip GOVERNMENT: Leaders Archduke Franz Ferdinand	GOVERNMENT: Alliances Triple Entente Allies Triple Alliance Central Powers	SOCIETY: Ideologies and Organizations Black Hand militarism secret alliances self-determination

Conducting World War I

*If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues —
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est
Pro patria mori.*

—Wilfred Owen, from “Dulce et Decorum Est” (1920)

Essential Question: What were some of the methods governments used to fight World War I?

British poet Wilfred Owen’s “Dulce et Decorum Est” is one of the most famous war poems of the 20th century. Most of the poem describes the horrors of modern warfare, and the final lines of the excerpt, translated as “It is sweet and noble to die for one’s country,” he labels “The old Lie.” No previous war had involved as many nations from different parts of the world and none had killed as many soldiers and civilians.

At the outbreak of World War I, Britain was the only major power going into the war without universal **conscription**, compulsory enlistment in the armed forces. Realizing that patriotism could be contagious, the British Army began to recruit “Pals Battalions” made up of men who already knew each other. The first of these was made up of a group of stockbrokers from the City of London. Other Pals Battalions were recruited in cities throughout Britain, such as Liverpool and Manchester. Because the men who volunteered were friends or associates, these battalions were especially close knit. By the end of the war, one out of four British men had served in the military.

Changes in Warfare

Many modern films such as *Saving Private Ryan*, set during World War II, and *Platoon*, set during the Vietnam War, show that war is *not* a glorious experience, but most Europeans saw warfare differently during the first few months of World War I. “Everybody said, ‘It’ll be over by Christmas,’” a British soldier named Bill Haine recalled. The war began in June 1914. Hundreds of

thousands of teenage boys enthusiastically enlisted in the military, dreaming of heroism. Wartime assemblies sounded more like high school pep rallies, in which speakers naively predicted swift and easy victories in battles against supposedly inferior enemies. Leaders of some of the socialist parties were among the few Europeans who spoke out against the war. Even socialists were divided on the issue, however, as many supported the war efforts of their nation.

At the time, few people actually understood how brutal 20th-century warfare could be. As the war dragged on, the world became aware of the horrific effects of new advances in war technology and tactics, such as trench warfare, poison gas, machine guns, submarines, airplanes, and tanks.

- The defining experience for most soldiers in this war was the time spent in the trenches, long ditches dug in the ground with the excavated earth banked in front in order to defend against enemy fire. **Trench warfare** was not a glorious way to fight a war. Combatant nations dug hundreds of miles of trenches facing one another, and soldiers slept, ate, and fought in the trenches for months at a time. Trenches were often cold, muddy, and rat-infested. Many soldiers died from diseases caused by unhygienic conditions. Erich Maria Remarque's 1929 novel, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, and the 1930 film based on it give a vivid sense of a soldier's life in the trenches. Remarque was a young German soldier during World War I.
- **Poison gas** was one of the most insidious weapons of the new style of warfare. Chlorine, phosgene, and mustard gas were used during World War I. Soldiers were soon equipped with gas masks, which were effective when used immediately. Although fatalities were limited, the effects of a gas attack could be extremely painful and long lasting. Many veterans suffered permanent damage to their lungs. After the war, international treaties outlawed the use of poison gas.
- Developed in the late 1800s, **machine guns** could fire more than 500 rounds of ammunition per minute, increasing the deadly impact of warfare. The weapon made it difficult for either side in a battle to gain new territory.
- Although primitive **submarines** had been used briefly in the American Civil War, they played a much larger part in World War I, wreaking havoc on the shipping lanes of the Atlantic Ocean.
- **Airplanes** in 1914 were still light, small, and unable to carry many weapons. Therefore, they did not present much of a threat to troops, vehicles, or ships. At first, airplanes were used mainly to carry on reconnaissance (observation) of enemy lines. By 1915 they were being fitted with machine guns and aerial combat began. Individual "air aces" would engage in "dog fights" with enemy aircraft.
- The British developed **tanks** to protect troops as they moved across vast areas of difficult terrain, even over trenches, with the ability to fire

at the enemy. They were developed by the Royal Navy, and originally referred to as *landships*. They got their name from the fact that during their development, they were disguised as water tanks.

With both the Central Powers and the Allies using brutal weapons and tactics, neither side could defeat the other. The result was a bloody four-year **stalemate** in which the death toll and suffering rose ever higher.

The United States Enters the War

Economic ties between the United States and the Allies were one underlying reason for U.S. entry into the war in 1917. In addition, many Americans believed that the Allied nations were more democratic than the Central Powers were. A third reason was growing resentment against the Germans, especially for **U-boat** (submarine) attacks on ships carrying civilians, including Americans. On May 7, 1915, a German submarine attacked and sank the *Lusitania*, an ocean liner carrying more than 100 U.S. citizens among its passengers.

The event that finally pushed the United States into the war was the interception of the **Zimmermann Telegram** in January 1917. In this document, the German government offered to help Mexico reclaim territory it had lost to the United States in 1848 if Mexico allied itself with Germany in the war.

Total War

Combatant nations intensified the conflict in World War I by committing all their resources to the war effort. This strategy, known as **total war**, meant that a nation's domestic population, in addition to its military, was committed to winning the war. Thus, millions of civilians, including women, worked in factories producing war materials. Workers imported from China helped make up for labor shortages in Britain, France, and Russia. Entire economies were centered on winning the war. Governments set up planning boards that set production quotas, price and wage controls, and the rationing of food and other supplies. They censored the media and imprisoned many who spoke out against the war effort.

Propaganda was another component of total war. **Propaganda** is communication meant to influence the attitudes and opinions of a community around a particular subject by spreading inaccurate or slanted information. Governments invested heavily in army and navy recruitment campaigns and other wartime propaganda. Posters and articles in newspapers and magazines often depicted the enemy crudely or misrepresented the facts of the war completely. For example, American and British propaganda demonized the German army, exaggerating reports of atrocities against civilians. Likewise, German propaganda demonized the Americans and the British.

The use of highly emotional and often misleading information fomented hatred and bitterness across borders, among civilians as well as soldiers. Other propaganda was more subtle. For example, the U.S. government sent artists to the front lines in Europe to illustrate scenes of battle and glorify Allied soldiers.



Source: Library of Congress



Source: Library of Congress

Posters recruiting sailors and soldiers for World War I in the United States and Great Britain reflected how governments used art and media to appeal to nationalist feelings in the early 20th century.

A Global War

World War I was fought in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. Not since the Seven Years' War of the late 18th century had there been such a **global war**. Most of the major combatants in World War I ruled colonies in Asia, Africa, the Americas, and the Pacific. Competition for these colonies was one major reason for war. Imperialism extended the boundaries of the war, and major battles were fought in North Africa and the Middle East. Japan entered the war on the side of the Allies so that it could take control of German colonies in the Pacific—the Marshall Islands, the Mariana Islands, Palau, and the Carolines. Japan also occupied Tsingtao (Qingdao), a German-held port in China.

The British seized most of Germany's colonies in Africa. However, the Germans held on to German East Africa, later called Tanzania. The British also defended the Suez Canal from an attack by the Ottoman Empire.

Colonial troops reinforced their home countries' forces in several battles. About half a million Australians and New Zealanders enlisted to fight the war. These troops formed a special corps known as **ANZAC** and fought in a bloody year-long campaign at **Gallipoli**, a peninsula in northwestern Turkey, that resulted in heavy Allied losses with little to show for the effort. Canadian troops fought in several European battles. Britain drafted Africans and Indians for combat roles in Europe. Some 90,000 Gurkha soldiers from Nepal fought in the Indian Army. Approximately 1.3 million soldiers served in the Indian Army

during the war, in Europe and Southwest Asia. The French Army included 450,000 Africans, mostly from West Africa and Algeria, as well as another 110,000 Europeans from North Africa. Some 44,000 Indochinese soldiers fought in the French army, with nearly 50,000 more working in support roles behind the lines. Some colonial troops fought in hopes that their efforts would gain them recognition from their colonizers, who often promised the colonies self-rule after the war ended.

Arabs, long under the rule of the Turkish-led Ottoman Empire, fought with the Allies because the British promised self-rule after the war if they were victorious. Arab troops attacked Ottoman forts in Arabia and present-day Israel and helped the British take over the cities of Baghdad, Damascus, and Jerusalem.



Source: Library of Congress



Source: Library of Congress



Source: Library of Congress



Source: Library of Congress

World War I armies included soldiers from Senegal in West Africa (upper left), France in Western Europe (upper right), India in South Asia (lower left), and Japan in Eastern Asia (lower right).

Women and the War In the early 20th century, most countries did not allow women to vote or to be soldiers. However, the sheer numbers of men enlisting meant that women's lives changed significantly. They began replacing those men on farms and in factories. Thousands of women served on the front lines as nurses, ambulance drivers, and switchboard operators.

Most countries forbade women from serving in combat, but Russia, Serbia, Romania, and Bulgaria allowed it. In 1917, the Russian government created an all-female battalion (military unit) as propaganda to shame men into continuing to fight. The commander Maria Bochkareva led the First Russian Women's Battalion of Death.

The Paris Peace Conference

The war itself greatly damaged Europe. However, the peace conference held in its wake would have even more profound effects on the entire world. The leaders of the victorious countries at the **Paris Peace Conference** became known as the **Big Four: Woodrow Wilson** (United States), **David Lloyd George** (Great Britain), **Georges Clemenceau** (France), and **Vittorio Orlando** (Italy). The Italians walked out of the peace conference in a rage because Italy would not get Dalmatia and other territories that they had been promised for joining the Allies, including the city of Fiume on the Adriatic Sea. Russia was not invited to the conference because it had undergone a communist revolution. Russia's Bolshevik leaders refused to honor Russia's financial debts to the Allies, who in return refused to recognize the Bolshevik government.

The Big Four had different visions of how to settle the peace. President Wilson's pledge to establish "peace without victory" reflected his belief that no one country should be severely punished or greatly rewarded. France's Clemenceau rejected this view. He believed that France, out of all the Allies represented at the conference, had suffered the most and thus deserved special considerations to be protected from Germany. He also argued that the victorious powers should seek some sort of revenge on the Central Powers for starting the war. Clemenceau complained that Wilson was an unrealistic idealist who was naive about European relations, even though Wilson had a Ph.D. in history. David Lloyd George tended to support Clemenceau's ideas, but he often acted as an intermediary between the two differing points of view.

Fourteen Points Despite Clemenceau's protests, Wilson pushed for his principles, which he outlined in a document called the **Fourteen Points**. He particularly wanted to create a **League of Nations**, an organization in which all nations of the world would convene to discuss conflicts openly, as a way to avoid the simmering tensions that had caused World War I. Although the other nations agreed to establish the League, the U.S. Senate voted against joining it and against ratifying the **Treaty of Versailles**, the 1919 peace treaty with Germany.

Wilson also believed that conquered peoples under the defeated Central Powers deserved the right to **self-determination**, to decide their own political futures. Instead of the colonies and territories of the Central Powers being snatched up by the Allies, conquered peoples should have the right to decide their own political fate. A number of new nations were created or resurrected in Europe as the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires were broken up: Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. The last three of these were home to Slavic peoples.

The Treaty of Versailles Because Wilson failed to convince France and Britain not to punish Germany, the Treaty of Versailles treated Germany harshly. Most notably, Germany had to pay billions of dollars in **reparations** for damage caused by the war, give up all of its colonies, and restrict the size of its armed forces. Germans took the entire blame for the war. Signing the treaty was humiliating for German leaders. Moreover, the terms of the treaty caused tremendous hardship to the nation during the decade following World War I. The German economy suffered from sky-high inflation, partly due to the reparations the country was forced to pay. The German people were bitter in the immediate aftermath of the Paris Peace Conference. Resentment toward the **Weimar Republic**, which had agreed to the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, set the stage for an extreme and militaristic political party known as the Nazis to take power barely 15 years later. (Connect: Compare the forces that led to creation of the Treaty of Versailles and the Peace of Westphalia. See Topic 3.3.)

KEY TERMS BY THEME

GOVERNMENT: Policies

conscription
stalemate
propaganda
global war
self-determination
reparations

GOVERNMENT: Wars and Rebellions

Lusitania
Zimmermann Telegram
total war
ANZAC
Gallipoli
Paris Peace Conference

GOVERNMENT: Leaders

Big Four
Woodrow Wilson
David Lloyd George
Georges Clemenceau
Vittorio Orlando

GOVERNMENT: Treaties

Fourteen Points
League of Nations
Treaty of Versailles

GOVERNMENT: Countries

Weimar Republic

TECHNOLOGY: Warfare

trench warfare
poison gas
machine guns
submarines
airplanes
tanks
U-boat

CULTURE: Popular

*All Quiet on the Western
Front*

Economy in the Interwar Period

We had to struggle with the old enemies of peace—business and financial monopoly, speculation, reckless banking, class antagonism, sectionalism, war profiteering.

—U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1936)

Essential Question: How did different governments respond to economic crises after 1900?

Not long after the global trauma of World War I, a global economic crisis resulted in the Great Depression of the 1930s and eventually led to World War II. It undermined faith in the market-based economics that had delivered such wealth as imperialism spread. As unemployment, hunger, and homelessness increased, people turned to their governments for help. Governments had long been essential to capitalism—building roads, providing schools, and regulating trade—but across the world in the 1930s, government intervention in the economy increased. The United States became more liberal as President Roosevelt identified inequities and activities that undermined the economy and could lead to war. Countries such as Germany, Italy, and Japan, however, turned radically to the right. In Russia, government economic control was instituted through the implementation of often repressive Five-Year Plans based on production quotas.

The Great Depression

From today's perspective, the effects of World War I can look small compared to the even greater destruction caused by World War II. However, the effects were massive. Many Western Europeans felt bewildered. World War I brought anxiety to the people who suffered through it. The Allied nations, though victorious, had lost millions of citizens, both soldiers and civilians, and had spent tremendous amounts of money on the international conflict. The defeated Central Powers, particularly Germany and the countries that emerged from the breakup of Austria-Hungary, suffered even greater losses.

The Treaty of Versailles forced Germany to pay billions of dollars in reparations to the war's victors. War-ravaged Germany could not make these payments, so its government printed more paper money in the 1920s. This



Photo by Albert Harlingue/Roger Viollet/Getty Images

Severe inflation caused extreme hardship for Germans during the Weimar Republic. Notice the high prices on these common food items: 40,000 marks for a tomato or four eggs, 50,000 marks for a loaf of bread, etc. The total cost of the food on the table in this photo was 1 million marks!

action caused **inflation**, a general rise in prices. Inflation meant that the value of German money decreased drastically. To add to the sluggish postwar economy, France and Britain had difficulty repaying wartime loans from the United States, partly because Germany was having trouble paying reparations to them. In addition, the Soviet government refused to pay Russia's prerevolutionary debts.

Global Downturn Although the 1920s brought modest economic gains for most of Europe, the subsequent **Great Depression** ended the tentative stability. Agricultural overproduction and the United States' stock market crash in 1929 were two major causes of the global economic downturn. American investors who had been putting money into German banks removed it when the American stock market crashed. In addition to its skyrocketing inflation, Germany then had to grapple with bank failures. Germany thus suffered more than any other Western nation during the Great Depression. The economies of Africa, Asia, and Latin America suffered because they depended on the imperial nations that were experiencing this enormous economic downturn. Japan also suffered during the Depression because its economy depended on foreign trade. With the economic decline in the rest of the world, Japan's exports were cut in half between 1929 and 1931.

The Global Economy, 1929 to 1938		
Year	Total Global Production	Total Global Trade
1929	100	100
1930	86	89
1931	77	81
1932	70	74
1933	79	76
1934	95	79
1935	98	82
1936	110	86
1937	120	98
1938	111	89

Source: Adapted from data in Barry Eichengreen and Douglas Irwin, "The Protectionist Temptation: Lessons from the Great Depression for Today," March 17, 2009.

In this chart, the levels of production and trade for 1929 are represented by 100. The other numbers reflect changes from the 1929 level.

Keynesian Economics The Great Depression inspired new insights into economics. British economist **John Maynard Keynes** rejected the laissez-faire ideal. He concluded that intentional government action could improve the economy. During a depression, he said, governments should use **deficit spending** (spending more than the government takes in) to stimulate economic activity. By cutting taxes and increasing spending, governments would spur economic growth. People would return to work, and the depression would end.

New Deal The administration of President **Franklin Delano Roosevelt** used Keynes's ideas to address the Great Depression in the United States. Roosevelt and his backers created a group of policies and programs known collectively as the **New Deal**. Its goal was to bring the country relief, recovery, and reform: **relief** for citizens who were suffering, including the poor, the unemployed, farmers, minorities, and women; **recovery** to bring the nation out of the Depression, in part through government spending; and **reform** to change government policies in the hopes of avoiding such disasters in the future.

By 1937, unemployment was declining and production was rising. Keynesian economics seemed to be working. However, Roosevelt feared that government deficits were growing too large, so he reversed course. Unemployment began to grow again. The Great Depression finally ended after the United States entered World War II in 1941 and ran up deficits for military spending that dwarfed those of the New Deal programs.

Impact on Trade The Great Depression was a global event. Though it started in the industrialized countries of the United States and Europe, it spread to Latin America, Africa, and Asia. By 1932, more than 30 million people worldwide were out of work. People everywhere turned to their governments

for help. As unemployment increased, international trade declined, a decline made worse as nations then imposed strict tariffs, or taxes on imports, in an effort to protect the domestic jobs they still had.

In contrast to most countries, Japan dug itself out of the Depression relatively rapidly. Japan devalued its currency; that is, the government lowered the value of its money in relation to foreign currencies. Thus, Japanese-made products became less expensive than imports. Japan's overseas expansionism also increased Japan's need for military goods and stimulated the economy.

Political Revolutions in Russia and Mexico

In the century's first two decades, rebellions erupted against long-standing authoritarian governments in Mexico, China, and Russia. (See Topic 7.1.) Revolutionaries unseated the ruling governments in each country, instituting their own political philosophies and practices. The revolutions influenced subsequent events in the Soviet Union, Mexico, and China in the interwar years. Each country took a different approach to managing their national economy.

Continuing Revolution in Russia Although Lenin and the Bolshevik Party had promised “peace, land, and bread” during World War I, they instead presided over a populace that faced starvation during the widespread **Russian Civil War** (1918–1921). Hundreds of thousands of Russians, Ukrainians, and others revolted against the Russian government's actions. Urban factory workers and sailors went on strike, and peasants began to hoard their food stocks. Industrial and agricultural production dropped sharply.

By 1921, Lenin realized that the Russian economy was near complete collapse. In an attempt to remedy this, he instituted a temporary retreat from communist economic policies. Under his **New Economic Plan (NEP)**, he reintroduced private trade, allowing farmers to sell their products on a small scale. Although the government permitted some economic liberties, it maintained strict political control. The NEP enjoyed modest successes, but it came to an end when Lenin died in 1924.

Joseph Stalin Several years after Lenin's death, Joseph Stalin took control of the **Politburo**, the Communist Party's central organization, setting himself up as a dictator. He remained in power for almost 30 years. Once in power, Stalin abandoned Lenin's NEP and instituted the first **Five-Year Plan**, which was meant to transform the **Union of Soviet Socialist Republics** (also called the **USSR** or the **Soviet Union**) into an industrial power. He wanted his largely agricultural nation to “catch up” to the industrial nations of the West. At the same time, Stalin **collectivized** agriculture, a process in which farmland was taken from private owners and given to collectives to manage. In theory, a collective, or **kolkhoz**, was a group of peasants who freely joined together to farm a certain portion of land. In practice, however, peasants were forced by the state to work on a specific collective and were expected to follow detailed plans and to reach specific goals set by the government.

This elimination of private land ownership and the forced redistribution of land, livestock, and tools enraged farmers. Each year, the government seized food to send to the cities. The farmers retaliated against collectivization by burning crops and killing livestock. Many moved to the cities for a better life.

A series of five-year plans had mixed results. The collectivization of agriculture was a huge failure. Millions of peasants starved to death, especially in the Ukraine. However, heavy industry grew tremendously in the 1930s. Although consumer goods were in short supply, there were plenty of factory jobs available, and the cost of living was low.

Stalin's brutal regime is widely condemned today. He punished his political opponents by executing them or sentencing them to life terms in **gulags**, or labor camps, where many died. In addition, his agricultural policies led to the deaths of many millions of Soviet citizens. Because Stalin kept tight control of the press, details of his atrocities went largely unreported. Nonetheless, in the 1930s, an economically depressed world viewed the U.S.S.R. with a mix of horror and wonder. The USSR was rapidly industrializing and increasing its military power. It presented a challenge to countries with capitalist economies whose people were experiencing high levels of unemployment. (Connect: Write a paragraph connecting the USSR with the ideology of Marxism. See Topic 5.8.)

Party Rule in Mexico The economy took a different direction in Mexico. The Mexican revolution saw the emergence of one strong political party, the **Institutional Revolutionary Party**, or **PRI**. This party dominated Mexican politics for most of the 20th century. The Mexican political system has often been called corporatist since the ruling PRI party claimed favors, such as access to primary education and jobs created through improvements to infrastructure, for its constituents.

During PRI's rule, there was a vast improvement in the economy, especially in the period from 1930 to the 1970s. In the 1930s, efforts at land reform were successful under **Lázaro Cárdenas**. In 1938, for example, his regime nationalized the country's mostly foreign-owned oil industry, angering foreign investors. This company, **Petróleos Mexicanos** or **PEMEX**, became the second largest state-owned company in the world. Despite these reforms, however, the interwar period did not see dramatic changes in Mexico's social hierarchy.

Rise of Right-Wing Governments

In some countries, the turn to the right was radical. A new political system known as **fascism** arose that appealed to extreme nationalism, glorified the military and armed struggle, and blamed problems on ethnic minorities. Fascist regimes suppressed other political parties, protests, and independent trade unions. They justified violence to achieve their goals and were strongly anticommunist. Germany turned to fascism (see Topic 7.6), and some other countries did as well.

Rise of Fascism in Italy Benito Mussolini coined the term *fascism*, which comes from the term *fascis*, a bundle of sticks tied around an axe, which was an ancient Roman symbol for authority. This symbol helped characterize Italy's Fascist government, which glorified militarism and brute force.

The Italian fascist state was based on a concept known as **corporatism**, a theory based on the notion that the sectors of the economy—the employers, the trade unions, and state officials—are seen as separate organs of the same body. Each sector, or organ, was supposedly free to organize itself as it wished as long as it supported the whole. In practice, the fascist state imposed its will upon all sectors of society, creating a **totalitarian state**—a state in which the government controls all aspects of society.

Mussolini Takes Control Even though Italy had been considered one of the victors at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference—along with Britain, France, and the United States—Italy received very little territory from the Treaty of Versailles. This failure to gain from the war caused discontent in Italy. Amid the general bitterness of the 1920s, Mussolini and his allies in the Fascist Party managed to take control of the parliament. Mussolini became a dictator, repressing any possible opposition to his rule. Militaristic propaganda infiltrated every part of the Fascist government. For example, schoolchildren were taught constantly about the glory of their nation and their fearless leader, “*Il Duce*.”

Part of Mussolini's fascist philosophy was the need to conquer what he considered an inferior nation. During the imperialist “Scramble for Africa” in the 19th century, Italy seized **Libya** and colonized **Italian Somaliland**, now part of Somalia. However, the Italian army was pushed back by Abyssinia, modern-day Ethiopia, in the 1890s. In 1934, Mussolini called for the complete conquest of Abyssinia. In 1935, 100,000 Italian troops crossed the border from Somaliland to Abyssinia, defying sanctions from the League of Nations. This time, the Italian army overpowered Abyssinia's while the global community did little to stop the conquest. Many historians believe the Abyssinian crisis destroyed the League of Nations' credibility. In 1936, Mussolini and Germany's Adolf Hitler formed an alliance they hoped would dominate Europe.

Fascism and Civil War in Spain After the economic decline in the early 1930s, two opposing ideologies, or systems of ideas, battled for control of Spain. The **Spanish Civil War** that resulted soon took on global significance as a struggle between the forces of democracy and the forces of fascism.

The **Spanish Republic** formed in 1931 after King Alfonso XIII abdicated. In 1936, the Spanish people elected the **Popular Front**, a coalition of left-wing parties, to lead the government. A key aspect of the Front's platform was land reform, a prospect that energized the nation's peasants and radicals. Conservative forces in Spain, such as the Catholic Church and high-ranking members of the military, were violently opposed to the changes that the Popular Front promised. In July of the same year, Spanish troops stationed in Morocco conducted a military uprising against the Popular Front. This action marked the beginning of the Spanish Civil War, which soon spread to Spain itself. General

Francisco Franco led the insurgents, who called themselves **Nationalists**. On the other side were the **Republicans** or **Loyalists**, the defenders of the newly elected Spanish Republic.

Foreign Involvement Although the nations of Europe had signed a nonintervention agreement, Hitler of Germany, Mussolini of Italy, and Antonio Salazar of Portugal contributed armaments to the Nationalists. Civilian volunteers from the Soviet Union, Britain, the United States, and France contributed their efforts to the Loyalists. Many historians believe that without the help of Germany, Italy, and Portugal, the Nationalist side probably would not have prevailed against the Republic of Spain.

Guernica The foreign involvement in Spain's struggle also escalated the violence of the war. One massacre in particular garnered international attention. The German and Italian bombing of the town of **Guernica** in northern Spain's **Basque region** was one of the first times in history an aerial bombing targeted civilians. Many historians believe that the bombing of Guernica was a military exercise for Germany's air force, the **Luftwaffe**.

The tragedy of Guernica was immortalized in Pablo Picasso's painting of that name, commissioned by the Republic of Spain and completed in 1938. Although abstract, the painting brilliantly depicts the horrific violence of modern warfare and is one of the most significant works of 20th-century art.



Source: Museo Reina Sofia

Pablo Picasso, *Guernica* (1937)

Franco's Victory The Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) ended when Franco's forces defeated the Loyalist army. He ruled Spain as a dictator until his death in 1975. Spain did not officially enter World War II (1939–1945), but the government offered some help to Germany, Italy, and Japan.

Rise of a Repressive Regime in Brazil As in Europe, parts of Latin America also became more conservative. During the interwar years, Brazil was considered Latin America's "sleeping giant" because of its slow shift

from an agricultural to an industrial economy. Large landowners dominated the nation's economy, which frustrated members of the urban middle class. Compounding their frustration was the workers' suffering caused by the Great Depression. Discontent led to a bloodless 1930 coup, or illegal seizure of power, which installed Getulio Vargas as president.

Vargas's pro-industrial policies won him support from Brazil's urban middle class. They believed he would promote democracy. However, his actions paralleled those of Italy's corporate state under Mussolini. While Brazil's industrial sector grew rapidly, Vargas began to strip away individual political freedoms. His *Estado Novo* ("New State") program instituted government censorship of the press, abolition of political parties, imprisonment of political opponents, and **hypernationalism**, a belief in the superiority of one's nation over all others and the single-minded promotion of national interests. While these policies were similar to those of European fascists, the Brazilian government did not praise or rely on violence to achieve and maintain control.

Moreover, even though Brazil had close economic ties with the United States and Germany in the late 1930s, Brazil finally sided with the Allies in World War II. This political alignment against the Axis powers made Brazil look less like a dictatorship and more liberal than it actually was. World War II prompted the people of Brazil to push for a more democratic nation later. They came to see the contradiction between fighting fascism and repression abroad and maintaining a dictatorship at home.

Three Approaches to Modern Industrial Society			
Policy Area	Communism	Capitalism	Fascism
Economics	Believed that businesses should be owned or managed by the government	Believed that businesses should be owned privately and compete with each other	Believed that businesses should be owned privately and government should restrict competition
Internationalism and Nationalism	Supported internationalism by opposing colonialism and calling for global worker solidarity	Supported a mixture of nationalism and internationalism	Supported nationalism strongly by urging each nation to pursue its unique interests
War and Peace	Believed that international peace would follow the defeat of capitalism	Expressed mixed attitudes toward war and peace	Opposed peace on the belief that it weakened society
Equality	Supported both political and economic equality	Supported political equality but not economic equality	Opposed both political and economic equality
Religion	Advocated atheism	Allowed individual religious liberty	Use religion to build nationalism

KEY TERMS BY THEME

ECONOMICS: Concepts

inflation
deficit spending
relief
recovery
reform
collectivize
kolkhoz
corporatism

ECONOMICS: Events and Policies

Great Depression
New Deal
New Economic Plan (NEP)
Five-Year Plan

ECONOMICS: Economists

John Maynard Keynes

GOVERNMENT: Wars and Rebellions

Russian Civil War
Spanish Civil War
Guernica

GOVERNMENT: Politics

Politburo
Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI)
fascism
totalitarian state
Popular Front
Nationalists
Republicans
Loyalists
Luftwaffe

GOVERNMENT: Countries and Regions

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.)
Soviet Union
Libya
Italian Somaliland
Spanish Republic
Basque region
hypernationalism

GOVERNMENT: Leaders

Franklin Delano Roosevelt
Lázaro Cárdenas
Francisco Franco

GOVERNMENT: Institutions

gulag
PEMEX

Unresolved Tensions After World War I

The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom, but has debased it economically, politically, culturally, and spiritually.

—Indian National Congress, Declaration of Purna Swaraj
(Independence Day Resolution, January 26, 1930)

Essential Question: How did continuities and changes in territorial holdings create tensions after World War I?

As economic crises beset countries after World War I, unresolved disputes over the control of land continued to fester. The victors in the war, European powers and Japan, generally kept or expanded control over colonial territories. However, anti-imperial resistance was growing throughout Asia and Africa. In a larger context, the spread of nationalism in these regions was part of the same global trend that included the breakup of empires in Europe, the success of communism in Russia, and the spread of anti-immigrant sentiments in the United States. The example of Turkey's push for self-determination was already discussed in Topic 7.1. Similarly, events such as the May 4th Movement in China and groups such as the Indian National Congress demonstrated how nationalism was spreading throughout the world.

Effects of the War

The effects of World War I varied around the world. The United States prospered because of all the war materials and agricultural products it sold to Britain and the other Allies. By contrast, the European countries that suffered the greatest damage in the war were economically devastated.

Effects on Colonial Lands While nationalist movements had been brewing for decades in colonies in South Asia and West Africa, the war renewed the hopes of people in these regions for independence. African and Asian colonial troops contributed thousands of soldiers to the Allied war effort. In addition, this disastrous war showed colonial peoples that imperial powers such as Britain and France were not invincible.

German propaganda during the war had predicted that colonial soldiers' experience in the war would lead to a great uprising against colonial rule.

This did not materialize, although there were several local rebellions. Between November 1915 and September 1916, a large group of villages in French West Africa, between the Volta and Bani rivers in what later became Burkina Faso, united in an effort to drive out the French. It was only with a great effort and loss of life on both sides that the French managed to put down the revolt. The rebellion forced the French to recognize that they had an obligation to the people they colonized. After World War I, many war veterans from the French colonies assisted in colonial administration after they returned home.

Colonized people's war experiences raised their expectations. They thought that the principle of self-determination, as expressed in Wilson's Fourteen Points, would get them closer to self-rule. Nationalists in Africa and Asia hoped that the blood they had shed for their "home countries" would earn them some respect from Western Europe and thus begin a **decolonization** process.

However, the peace conference's **Big Three**—David Lloyd George, Woodrow Wilson, and Georges Clemenceau (after Italy left)—were not interested in freeing the colonies. After World War I, European powers granted self-determination only to white countries in Eastern Europe. Middle Eastern lands that had been a part of the Ottoman Empire came under the control of France and Britain in the League of Nations mandate system. Former German colonies in Africa had the same fate. German territories and spheres of influence in East Asia and the Pacific were transferred to various victorious nations of World War I. India and nearly every nation in Africa—as well as most of the Middle East—continued to be controlled by European nations.

Wilson even refused to meet with a group of Vietnamese nationalists, including a young Ho Chi Minh, who asked to speak with him about self-determination for Vietnam. This rejection fueled stronger nationalist movements in colonies scattered across the southern rim of Asia and in parts of Africa. The seeds of African, Arab, and Asian nationalism were sown largely in the aftermath of World War I, although they did not come to fruition until much later.

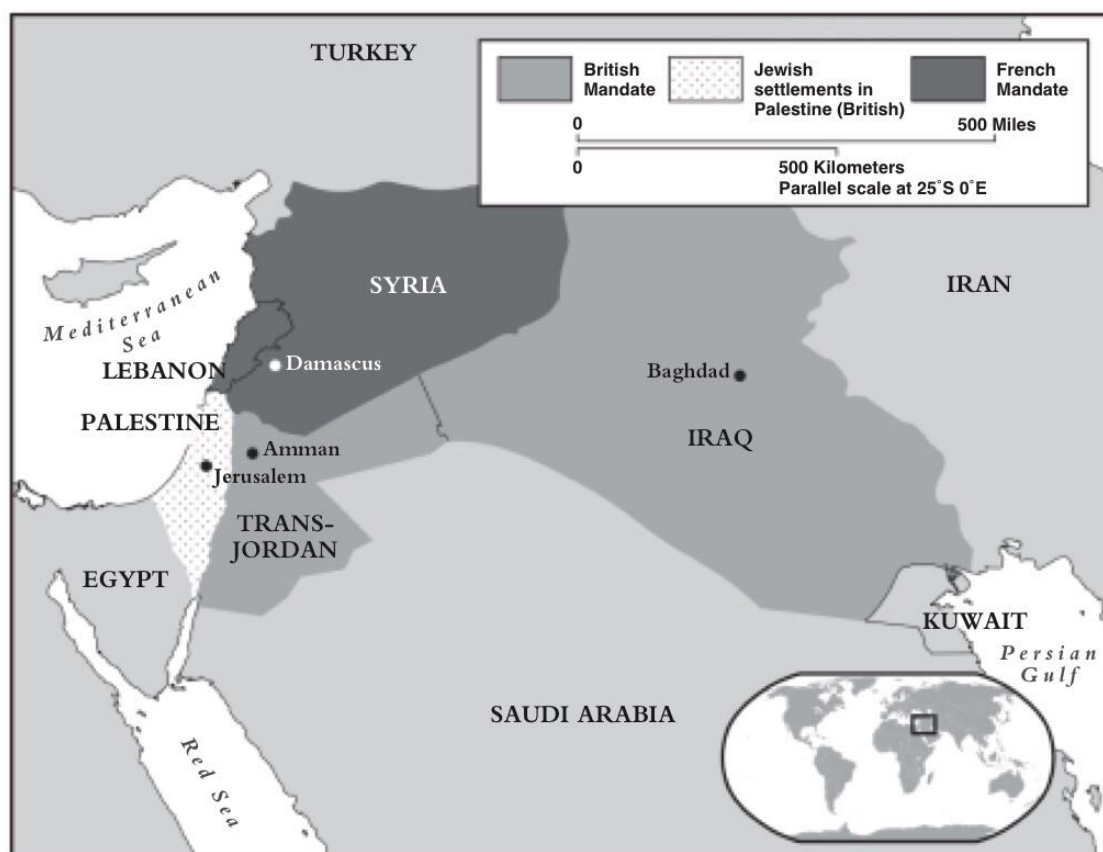
The Mandate System

Arab rebels of the former Ottoman Empire were especially insulted by the results of the peace conference. They had been promised self-rule if they fought with the Allies. Instead, the Allies forgot all of their promises and, through the League of Nations, established a **mandate system** to rule the colonies and territories of the Central Powers. Article 22 of the League of Nations charter stated that colonized people in Africa and Asia required "tutelage" from more "advanced" nations in order to survive. Thus, the Allied countries—including France, Great Britain, and Japan—were able to increase their imperial holdings through a new form of colonization. For example, Cameroon, which had been a German colony, was divided and transferred to France and Britain as separate mandates. Japan seized the German-held islands of the Western Pacific.

The Middle East experienced enormous upheaval because of the fall of the Ottoman Empire. Palestine, Transjordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq all became League of Nations mandates. These Arab states were not yet sovereign lands but virtual colonies of Great Britain and France. This infuriated the Arabs who lived in these lands and set the stage for a nationalist movement known as **Pan-Arabism**—an ideology that called for the unification of all lands in North Africa and the Middle East.

Another source of conflict arose in 1917, when the British government issued the **Balfour Declaration**, which stated that **Palestine** should become a permanent home for the Jews of Europe. Those who supported a Jewish homeland were known as **Zionists**. After the Allied victory in the Great War, European Jews moved in droves to Palestine, which Britain controlled.

Mandates in the Middle East After World War I



Anti-Colonialism in South Asia

The setback presented by the Paris Conference inspired anticolonial activists to redouble their efforts. In South Asia, the **Indian National Congress** formed in the late 19th century to air grievances against the colonial government. By the end of World War I in 1918, it had become a strong voice for independence.

Massacre at Amritsar In the spring of 1919, a group of Indian nationalists gathered in a public garden in Amritsar, Punjab, to protest the arrest of two freedom fighters. The protest took place during a Sikh festival, which had attracted thousands of villagers to the city, which Sikhs considered

holy. Although the throngs were peaceful, the British colonial government had recently made such public gatherings illegal. Armed colonial forces fired hundreds of shots into the unarmed crowd, killing an estimated 379 people and wounding 1,200 more.

The Amritsar massacre radicalized many Indians. It convinced moderate members of the Indian National Congress that independence from Britain was the only way forward.

Gandhi By the 1920s, **Mohandas Gandhi** had brought the congress's cause to the Indian masses and caught the attention of the world. His **satyagraha** ("devotion-to-truth") **movement** embarked on a campaign of **civil disobedience** that encouraged Indians to break unjust laws and serve jail time. These actions, he believed, would stir the consciousness of the empire and the international community and expose the injustice of Britain's imperial system.

Gandhi, who came to be known by Indians as **Mahatma**, or "the great soul," led a boycott against British goods. After returning to India from South Africa, Gandhi wore the traditional cotton Hindu *dhoti* rather than the Western-style suits he had worn as a lawyer in Natal. Wearing homespun clothes was a form of protest against British fabrics made from Indian cotton and sold to Indians at inflated prices.

One of Gandhi's first campaigns became known as the **Salt March**. British authorities had made it illegal for Indians to produce their own sea salt. The commodity was easy to make in the tropical country, but Britain wanted a monopoly on salt. In 1930, Gandhi led thousands of Indians to the Arabian Sea and simply picked up a few grains of salt, in defiance of Britain's unjust edict.



Source: GandhiServe Foundation. Wikimedia Commons

Gandhi (shirtless) and his followers during the Salt March of 1930

The Two-State Solution While anticolonial sentiment was building, leaders of the independence movement disagreed about how India should define its national identity. Muslim leader **Muhammad Ali Jinnah**, a member of the Muslim minority in the largely Hindu Indian National Congress, originally favored Muslim-Hindu unity but later proposed a two-state plan for South Asian independence. He was concerned that Muslim interests would be overwhelmed by Hindu concerns in an independent India. He proposed creating a separate state, **Pakistan**, that would include the heavily Muslim western and eastern parts of South Asia. This proposal made several leaders, including Gandhi and **Jawaharlal Nehru**, who eventually became India's first prime minister, anxious about the region's future. Although independence did not come for India and Pakistan until after World War II, the interwar years were critical times for the anticolonial movement. (Connect: Write a paragraph connecting 20th century tensions between Hindus and Muslims in India with India's earlier religious history. See Topic 1.3.)

Nationalism in East Asia

Korea, China, and Japan had not been formally colonized by Europe, but they did suffer from European domination. These countries also demonstrated the spread of the desire for self-determination.

The March First Movement in Korea The small country of Korea had suffered under increasing Japanese influence since the 1890s. In 1910, Japan took control of Korea. After World War I, Japan expected to expand its role in East Asia, just as European states did in the Middle East. The prospect of European support for a stronger Japan, and the mysterious death of the Korean emperor, caused Korean resentment to explode. On March 1, 1919, Koreans began a series of protests that involved as many as 2 million Koreans out of a population of 17 million. The occupying Japanese forces cracked down harshly, killing several thousand Koreans. But the **March First Movement** demonstrated the power of Korean nationalism.

The May Fourth Movement in China During World War I, China supported the Allies. Britain and France hired nearly 150,000 Chinese to work in factories, dig trenches and do other support work. China hoped that the victorious Allies would support China's desire to reclaim German-controlled land on the Shandong Peninsula in northeast China. However, Japan wanted the same land. At the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, Great Britain and France sided with Japan. Infuriated, Chinese intellectuals and workers staged anti-Japanese demonstrations beginning on May 4, 1919. The **May Fourth Movement** symbolized China's growing nationalism and demand for democracy. Angered by Europe's support for Japan, many Chinese rejected Western-style government. They turned toward the Marxist model of the Soviet Union. Several May Fourth leaders joined the Chinese Communist

Party. In the years after the May Fourth protests, two main groups fought for power: the communists and the nationalists.

- The **Chinese Communist Party (CCP)** was founded in 1921. It was eventually led by **Mao Zedong** (or Mao Tse-tung), the son of a prosperous peasant, who was inspired by the communist revolution in Russia. Instead of energizing the working classes of Chinese cities, however, Mao believed that China's communist revolution could be based on the revolt of peasants, who made up the vast majority of China's population.
- The Chinese Nationalist Party, or **Kuomintang**, was led by Sun Yat-sen. He was devoted to full independence and industrialization, and he allied with Mao's forces to free China from foreign domination and overthrow the warlords. Following Sun's death in 1925, **Chiang Kai-shek** took control of the Nationalist Party. Chiang was a conservative and had a deep-seated distrust of communism. In 1927, Chiang's forces attacked and nearly annihilated Mao's forces, initiating the Chinese Civil War.

The Long March Mao and remnants of the Chinese Communist Party retreated into China's interior, where for several years they trained in hiding. In 1934, Chiang's forces again attacked Mao's army in the rural areas of Jiangxi. After the attack, Mao's forces began the **Long March**, a year-long, 6,000-mile long retreat. It traversed treacherous mountains, deep marshes, and extremely dry deserts. Of the 80,000 or more who began the Long March, only 10,000 remained to assemble in 1935 in northern China.

The Chinese Communist Party was weak after the Long March. However, peasants admired Mao and his army's tremendous stamina and their commitment to their ideals. This support among peasants would later be important for the success of the Communists in winning control of the country.

While the Communists were retreating on the Long March, the Nationalist Kuomintang continued to rule much of China during the 1930s. Chiang, however, had alienated many. Old traditions were losing support, but he advocated Confucianism. When opponents criticized him, he suppressed free speech. When people accused the Nationalists of corruption, he did not stop it.

China, Japan, and Manchukuo In 1935, the Nationalists and Communists in China suspended their civil war to unite against a more pressing danger: Japan. Seeking access to natural resources on the Asian mainland, Japan had invaded Manchuria in northern China in September 1931. Tensions increased when someone, either Chinese dissidents or Japanese soldiers, attacked a railway owned by Japan near Mukden. When the League of Nations condemned Japan's actions in Manchuria, Japan gave up its membership in the League and seized more land. In 1932, the Japanese set up a puppet state called **Manchukuo**. To make Manchukuo seem like an independent Chinese



state, it selected the last Chinese emperor to sit on its throne. (Connect: Create a timeline showing the steps Japan took as it moved from isolation to imperialism. See Topic 5.6.)

Japan continued to expand its empire until 1945, the year World War II ended. It seized the Philippines (under partial U.S. control at the time), the Dutch East Indies, British Malaya, Burma, and numerous Pacific islands. Japan termed these territories the **Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere**. Although Japan claimed to be liberating people from Western imperialism, people in the region experienced Japan as a conqueror.

Resistance to French Rule in West Africa

As in South Asia, people all over Africa were disappointed that their colonies did not achieve independence after World War I. Pro-independence movements in Africa began with European-educated intellectuals. For example, the future leader of Kenya, **Jomo Kenyatta**, studied in London. **Léopold Senghor**, the future leader of Senegal, studied in Paris. In Europe, African intellectuals learned to recognize the racial discrimination taking place in their homelands. Most members of the educated elite worked for the colonial government, if they were not self-employed attorneys or doctors.

Africans under colonial rule resisted the colonizers. Black workers in French West Africa staged a series of strikes, including a strike of railway workers in 1917 and a general strike in 1946. Some of these actions spread throughout French West Africa (Senegal, Benin, Ivory Coast, and Guinea). Strikers protested discriminatory wage and benefit policies and in some cases won a number of their demands through a compromise settlement.

KEY TERMS BY THEME		
GOVERNMENT: Policies decolonization mandate system Balfour Declaration civil disobedience GOVERNMENT: Leaders Big Three Mohandas Gandhi Muhammad Ali Jinnah Jawaharlal Nehru Mao Zedong Chiang Kai-shek	GOVERNMENT: Movements Pan-Arabism Indian National Congress satyagraha (devotion-to-truth) movement Salt March March First Movement May Fourth Movement Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Kuomintang Long March	GOVERNMENT: Countries Palestine Pakistan GOVERNMENT: Imperialism Amritsar Manchukuo Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere CULTURE: People Zionists Mahatma Jomo Kenyatta Léopold Sédar Senghor

Causes of World War II

It is blood which moves the wheels of history.

—Benito Mussolini (1914, before he became *Il Duce*, the Leader)

Essential Question: What were the causes and consequences of World War II?

The causes of World War II lay in the unresolved issues in the aftermath of World War I. Economic instability in the postwar economies of Europe led to civil unrest in Italy and Germany. In Italy, the rise of fascism was directly related to the downturn of the Italian economy that occurred after World War I. Benito Mussolini and his National Fascist Party came to power in 1922 because of their promises to renew the Italian economy and create another Italian empire in the Mediterranean and beyond. The peace settlement after World War I also placed unsustainable economic and political terms on Germany and instituted territorial distributions that took away resources and created resentment among the German population. Thus, the ideology associated with Italian fascism and militarism—as seen in the quotation above—spread to Germany, where Hitler and the Nazis adopted it.

The Path to War

Out of the context of the broad economic and political trends emerged **Adolf Hitler**. His extreme views on the superiority of the Aryan race and his vision of a great German civilization led him to persecute Jews and other minorities and to systematically seize land.

Rise of Nazism Following Germany's defeat in 1918, the democratically elected **Weimar Republic** replaced the monarchical rule of the kaiser. Under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, the new German government not only had to pay billions in war reparations, but it also was not allowed to have an army. The Weimar Republic, appearing weak to the demoralized German people, became especially unpopular during the Great Depression.

The rolls of the unemployed swelled due to the weak German economy. Large numbers of young men, including many World War I veterans, found themselves with few job prospects. Such an environment fostered alienation and bitterness. Many Germans perceived the Weimar Republic to be too weak

to solve the country's problems, so they looked to right-wing political parties that promised strong action.

Hitler had declared his extreme anti-Semitic views in his book *Mein Kampf* ("My Struggle"), which he began writing in 1924 while in a Bavarian prison after a failed coup attempt. The National Socialist German Worker's Party, or the **Nazis**, came to power legally after the party did well in the 1932 parliamentary elections. In early 1933, the president of Germany, Paul von Hindenburg, invited Adolf Hitler to form a government as chancellor, which he did. Hindenburg died in 1934, giving Hitler the opening he needed to declare himself president.

Through manipulation, the Nazi Party instilled fear and panic in the German people, making them believe that they were in a state of emergency. For example, the Nazis staged a burning of the **Reichstag**, the German parliament building, and blamed radical extremists for the act. Using domestic security as justification, Hitler outlawed all other political parties and all forms of resistance to his rule.

Hitler openly promoted ultranationalism and **scientific racism**, a pseudoscientific theory that claimed that certain races were genetically superior to others. He also advanced an extreme form of **anti-Semitism**, or hostility toward Jews. He filled his speeches with accusations against German Jews, whom Hitler claimed were responsible for the nation's domestic problems. Nazi propaganda emphasized a need for a "pure" German nation of "**Aryans**," purged of "outsiders"—not only Jews, but also Slavs, communists, Roma (also known as Gypsies), and gay men and women. Hitler suggested that the only way for Germany to live up to its potential was to eliminate the corrupting influence of these groups, particularly the Jews.

Nuremberg Laws Hitler's anti-Jewish campaign began with laws designed to disenfranchise and discriminate against them. The **Nuremberg Laws**, passed in 1935, forbade marriage between Jews and gentiles (people who are not Jewish), stripped Jews of their citizenship, and unleashed a series of subsequent decrees that effectively pushed Jews to the margins of German society. German Jews, many of whom were successful in their careers and felt assimilated into German society, were shocked by the way they were being treated. Some Eastern European nations, such as Romania and Bulgaria, also passed laws discriminating against their Jewish citizens.

The Axis Powers Hitler then sought new allies to help him acquire *Lebensraum* (living space) for the new German empire. He did not try to hide his ambition to conquer the entire continent. Hitler's lust for land eventually brought the international community to the brink of war. He first formed a military pact with Fascist Italy, the **Rome-Berlin Axis**, in October 1936. In addition to their need for military support, the two countries shared a political ideology and economic interests. Germany then created a military alliance with Japan based on mutual distrust of communism, known as the **Anti-Comintern Pact**. The alliances among these three nations created the **Axis Powers**.

Kristallnacht Hitler's campaign to rid Germany of Jews predated his aggressive land grabs in Europe. His propaganda and the Nuremberg Laws successfully created an atmosphere of hostility, hatred, and distrust within Germany. This tension erupted one night in early November 1938. **Kristallnacht**, the "Night of the Broken Glass," produced anti-Jewish riots that ostensibly occurred in response to the assassination of a German diplomat by a Jewish teenager. Although it appeared to be a spontaneous burst of outrage on the part of the German citizenry, Nazi leaders had actually engineered the entire operation. The riots resulted in the deaths of more than 90 German Jews and the destruction of nearly every synagogue in Germany and some 7,000 Jewish shops. More than 30,000 Jews were dragged from their homes, arrested, and sent to concentration camps. Most of these prisoners were eventually released on orders to leave Germany, an option not given to later concentration camp prisoners.



Source: Center for Jewish History, New York City

Interior of a Berlin synagogue after it was set on fire during Kristallnacht, November 9, 1938.

Nazi Germany's Aggressive Militarism

The terms of the Treaty of Versailles severely limited the German military after World War I. Yet Hitler wanted a stronger military to acquire more land. In March 1935, he broke the treaty when he announced the creation of a German air force and a policy of conscription to enlarge the size of the army.

The Treaty of Versailles Under the treaty, a strip of land in the Rhineland 31 miles wide was set up as a buffer zone between Germany and France. Germany was not allowed to station troops there. Hitler broke the agreement,

sending German troops into the Rhineland on March 7, 1936. Both France and Britain protested this move, but they took no other action.

Some British believed that Hitler was the strong anticommunist leader that central Europe needed to keep order. Others were simply reluctant to return to war. So Britain followed a policy of **appeasement**, giving in to Germany's demands in hopes of keeping the peace. However, Germany's military expansion and its support of the fascist Spanish Nationalist government during the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) indicated that Hitler was increasing his power. (Connect: Describe the connection between the militarism that led up to World War I and World War II. See Topic 7.2.)

German-Austrian Unification With his military revived and alliances in hand, Hitler felt confident about taking his next step in the creation of a new German empire, the **Third Reich**. His plan was to bring Austria, where he was born, under German rule. Hitler used the threat of invasion to pressure the Austrian chancellor into giving more power to the Austrian Nazi Party. As Hitler had planned, the Austrian Nazis then opened the door for German troops to occupy Austria with no resistance. With the **Anschluss** (political union), Austria officially became part of the Third Reich in March 1938.

Czechoslovakia The annexation of Austria was only the first step for Hitler. He wanted more. In September 1938, he issued a demand to Czechoslovakia for the border territory of the **Sudetenland**. Most of the people who lived in this region spoke German; Hitler argued that the area was a natural extension of his Aryan empire. The German leader met with the leaders of Britain, France, and Italy in Munich to discuss his demands. **Neville Chamberlain**, the British prime minister, again argued that a policy of appeasement would keep the peace and put an end to Hitler's demands for more land. The **Munich Agreement** allowed Hitler to annex the Sudetenland in return for a promise that Germany would not take over any more Czech territory. This was a fateful miscalculation. Hitler saw that the British were not willing to stand up to his illegal land grabs, emboldening him to seize control of all of Czechoslovakia with an armed invasion in 1939.

The Conflict over Poland Hitler next set his sights on the Polish port of **Danzig**. Although Germany did have some historical claims to the port, in reality, Hitler was merely looking for an excuse to invade Poland. Britain, in the meantime, had reached the end of its policy of appeasement and agreed to protect Poland from a German attack. Britain and France also reached out to the Soviet Union to form a stronger alliance against Germany.

Germany, however, was already in negotiations with the Soviets. With the signing of the **German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact** on August 23, 1939, the two nations pledged not to attack one another. During the negotiations for the pact, Hitler secretly offered Stalin control of eastern Poland and the Baltic States if Stalin would stand by during a German invasion of western Poland. With this assurance in hand, Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, claiming that Poland had attacked first. Britain and France honored their agreement to protect Poland and declared war on Germany. These actions marked the official start of World War II in Europe.

Causes of World War II	
Diplomatic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The imbalance of the Treaty of Versailles • Failure of appeasement • Failure of the League of Nations
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global depression • The Treaty of Versailles
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Japan's militarism • Germany's militarism and the rise of Hitler

Japan's Expansion in Asia

By the time Germany invaded Poland in 1939, Japan had already been moving aggressively against Korea and China for almost 50 years. In 1931, Japan had invaded Manchuria. After several months of fighting, it successfully created the state of Manchukuo under its control. Then, in 1937, a small incident in this region between Japanese troops and Chinese troops quickly escalated. Soon, Japan had launched a full-scale invasion of China. This marked the start of World War II in Asia.

KEY TERMS BY THEME		
GOVERNMENT: People Adolf Hitler Neville Chamberlain GOVERNMENT: Geography Weimar Republic Sudetenland Danzig GOVERNMENT: Policies Nuremberg Laws Lebensraum Anschluss Munich Agreement	GOVERNMENT: Alliances Rome-Berlin Axis Anti-Comintern Pact Axis Powers German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact GOVERNMENT: Organizations Nazis Reichstag Third Reich	CULTURE: Beliefs and Ideas <i>Mein Kampf</i> scientific racism anti-Semitism Aryans appeasement SOCIETY: Kristallnacht

Conducting World War II

We shall not flag nor fail. We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France and on the seas and oceans; we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air. We shall defend our island whatever the cost may be; we shall fight on beaches, landing grounds, in fields, in streets and on the hills. We shall never surrender.

—British Prime Minister Winston Churchill (June 4, 1940)

Essential Question: What similarities and differences were there in the methods governments used to conduct war?

During World War II, governments rallied all their resources in the war effort. The call to intense nationalism, as illustrated in Winston Churchill's speech in the British House of Commons, was part of concerted policies that used all forms of communication to mobilize the population. Appeal to ideological beliefs, including fascism and communism, dominated daily life during the conflict and minimized resistance to militarism.

Governments also used new military technology and tactics, including the atomic bomb and "total war," disregarding previously accepted laws of war. These policies increased the level of wartime casualties.

Japan and Imperialist Policies

With the military in control of the government, Japan harbored imperialist ambitions that would lead to a world war in the Pacific. The Mukden Incident and the takeover of land in Manchuria in a state called Manchukuo (see Topic 7.5) were early efforts in this drive.

New Order in East Asia The occupation of parts of China was but one step in Japan's overall strategy, which was to create a "New Order in East Asia." The Japanese had looked to expand into Soviet Siberia, but when Germany and the Soviets signed the **Nonaggression Pact** of 1939, Japan had to look elsewhere for new territory. Nearby Southeast Asia, which had been under the control of imperial powers in Western Europe and the United States, was the most obvious target. However, Japan faced obstacles. Its occupation of China led to economic sanctions by the United States. Because Japan's economy relied on oil and scrap iron from the United States, sanctions threatened to strangle

its economy and undercut its military expansion. Therefore, Japan began to plan to retaliate against the United States with military force in the hope that by doing so, the Western powers would submit to Japan's imperial ambitions.

Germany's Early Victories and Challenges

Once war broke out in Europe, Hitler moved swiftly to acquire territory. He embarked on a strategy called **blitzkrieg**, or lightning war, to quickly subdue Poland. Germany used rapidly moving tank divisions supported by the air force in its four-week campaign. At the end of September 1939, Germany and the Soviets divided the country as they had planned when they signed the German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact.

Germany's rapid success in Poland encouraged Hitler to attack and conquer Denmark and Norway in April 1940 and the Netherlands, Belgium, and France in the following month. Germany then proceeded to bring the government and resources of the conquered nations under its control. As the Germans approached Paris, the French government fled to Bordeaux, in southern France. Germany took direct control of the northern two-thirds of the country. The French set up a new pro-Nazi regime based in **Vichy** under Marshal Henri-Philippe Pétain, an aged World War I hero. (Connect: Create a table comparing the conquests of Hitler and Genghis Khan. See Topic 2.2.)

Major Battles of World War II



British-American Relations Fearing that it would be the next victim in Germany's relentless and rapid campaign, Britain asked the United States for support. Despite a long history of isolationism from European troubles, President Roosevelt believed the United States should help the British.

In 1940, the two powers signed the **Destroyers-for-Bases Agreement**, in which the United States promised delivery of 50 destroyers in exchange

for eight British air and naval bases in the Western Hemisphere. In the 1941 **Lend-Lease Act**, the United States gave up all pretensions of neutrality by lending war materials to Britain. Also in 1941, Britain and the United States forged a policy statement known as the **Atlantic Charter**, which set down basic goals for the post-war world. The charter included such provisions as the restoration of self-government to those deprived of it, the abandonment of the use of force, and the disarmament of aggressor nations.

The Battle of Britain In Europe, Britain was the last major holdout against Nazi power. In July 1940, Hitler ordered a large campaign against the small island nation by the **Luftwaffe**, the German air force. He believed that bombardment from the air would sufficiently weaken the country so that German sea and land forces could mount a successful invasion. Initially targeting military bases in this **Battle of Britain**, the Germans turned to bombing British cities after the British Royal Air Force conducted a raid on Berlin. **Winston Churchill** termed this Britain's "finest hour" as the civilian population in London and other cities withstood months of relentless bombing.

The targeting of cities did provide one advantage for Britain: the British military was able to rebuild after the earlier raids on its bases. Ultimately, Britain's superior planes and radar system allowed it to destroy German planes faster than they could be replaced. By May 1941, Hitler was forced to postpone indefinitely any attempted invasion of Britain.

War on the Soviet Union After failing to invade Britain, Hitler turned east. He attacked the Soviet Union to eliminate Bolshevism and to create *Lebensraum*—land for settlement and development—for the German people. Germany's turning its focus to the east took pressure off Britain. Germany began its invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. Initially the Nazis experienced rapid success as they had in Western Europe, capturing large amounts of territory and two million Soviet troops. However, the German forces soon found themselves at the mercy of the harsh Russian winter. The Soviets defended the city of Leningrad in the **Siege of Leningrad**, which lasted three years and led to the deaths of a million Soviet men, women, and children.

Japan Overreaches

Japan experienced rapid victories in the Pacific. It launched a surprise air attack on the U.S. naval base at **Pearl Harbor** in Hawaii on December 7, 1941, destroying much of the U.S. Pacific fleet. Japan then seized the Philippines, the Dutch East Indies, British Malaya, Burma, and numerous Pacific islands.

Japan believed that the surprise attack and the damage to the U.S. Pacific Fleet would prompt the United States to negotiate a settlement favorable to Japan immediately. Instead, U.S. isolationism disappeared overnight; public opinion demanded retaliation against Japan. Great Britain and China joined the United States in the fight against Japanese aggression. The war truly became global when, within days, Hitler responded to the U.S. declaration of war against Japan with his own declaration of war against the United States.

Colonial Armies As the Axis powers expanded into new territory, Western colonies began to join the Allies in the war effort. For example, the Indian Army, which had started the war with only 200,000 men, ended the war as the largest volunteer army in history with more than 2.5 million men. Although the Indian Army sent troops to North Africa, the bulk of its troops fought against the Japanese in Southeast Asia.

Home Fronts

Like World War I, World War II was a total war. Most countries mobilized all their resources, including the civilian population, to achieve victory. The United States started with the strongest industrial sector of any country in the world and it added stringent government planning to provide factories what they needed. In addition, unlike anywhere in Europe, U.S. industry operated without threat of military attack. The United States ramped up production of the resources required for war, including ships, tanks, planes, landing craft, radar equipment, guns, and ammunition. With the enlistment of large numbers of men in the armed forces, women found far more opportunities to work in factories and offices. The U.S. government promoted art of “Rosie the Riveter” to encourage women to succeed at jobs that were once thought to be for men.

Instead of mobilizing all available citizens in the war effort, German leaders relied on forced labor, some of it in concentration camps. At its peak, 20 percent of the wartime workforce was forced labor, with 600,000 French citizens working in German war plants and 1.5 million French soldiers working in prisoner-of-war (POW) camps. The solution was counterproductive, however. The workers were treated so poorly that productivity was low.

In Japan, efforts on the home front were confused. The government presented an optimistic view of the war instead of trying to mobilize resources. The government took pride in not using women in the war effort, claiming that the enemy is “drafting women but in Japan, out of consideration for the family system, we will not.” The government was able to systematically remove children from cities to the countryside when bombing of cities started late in the war. It was also successful in rationing food throughout the war. (Connect: Write a paragraph comparing and contrasting warfare during World War I with the warfare before and during World War II. See Topic 7.3.)

The Tide Turns in the European Theater

With its entry into the war in December 1941, the United States joined the other Allied powers, Great Britain and the Soviet Union. In spite of political differences, the three nations were united in their determination to achieve a military victory and agreed that Axis surrender must be unconditional.

In early 1942, the Allies were struggling in Europe and North Africa. General **Erwin Rommel**, the “Desert Fox,” led German troops in Egypt and threatened to take the northern city of Alexandria. But in the second half of 1942, the tide turned. The British defeated Rommel at the **Battle of El**

Alamein. And after months of fighting, a Soviet counteroffensive successfully defeated the pride of Hitler's military, the German Sixth Army, in the **Battle of Stalingrad**. Although the Germans remained in control of most of Western Europe, the momentum of the war in Europe had turned against the Nazis.

The Tide Turns in the Pacific Theater

The year 1942 was also crucial in the war against Japan. The first Allied victory occurred in May in the **Battle of the Coral Sea**, when the U.S. Navy stopped a Japanese fleet set to invade New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, thus helping to prevent a future invasion of Australia. The following month, with the destruction of four Japanese aircraft carriers at the **Battle of Midway Island**, Allied naval forces demonstrated their superiority in the Pacific. These battles stopped the advance of the Japanese. The first major Allied offensive was on the island of **Guadalcanal**, which ended in early 1943 with an Allied victory.

The Allied forces in the Pacific under U.S. General **Douglas MacArthur** used a strategy called **island-hopping**. The Allies attacked islands where Japan was weak and skipped those where Japan was strong. The Allies slowly, and at great human cost, moved through the Philippines, getting closer to Japan itself.

Technology was critical to Allied success. The development of fleets of **aircraft carriers**, ships that allowed planes to take off from and land on their decks at sea, provided air support for battleships and increased the range and flexibility of naval forces. Aircraft were used for raids on enemy ships and bases and for intelligence gathering. Submarines sank about 55 percent of the Japanese merchant fleet, severely damaging Japan's supply lines.

The Last Years of the War

The Allied successes of 1942 put the Axis powers on the defensive in 1943. The Allies identified Italy as the weakest point under Axis control in Europe. In spite of German forces sent to aid Italy, the Allies gained control of the island of Sicily in July 1943, leading to the fall of Mussolini. After the Allies invaded southern Italy in September 1943, Italy turned against its former ally. After months of slow and costly progress, the Allies finally recaptured Rome on June 4, 1944.

June 6, 1944, has become known as **D-Day**, when about 150,000 Allied forces under the command of U.S. General Dwight Eisenhower launched an amphibious invasion from England, landing on the beaches of Normandy in northern France. Allied casualties were high. Eventually, however, the Allies established a base to begin the march toward Paris, which was liberated in August. With control of Western Europe slipping away, Germany's defeat was drawing closer.

The Germans made one final push against the Allies during the winter of 1944. The **Battle of the Bulge** was fought in the Ardennes Forest across parts of France, Belgium, and Luxembourg. An Allied victory left Germany with no

realistic expectation of winning the war, yet Hitler refused to give up. Allied air raids began to systematically destroy Germany's infrastructure and Allied troops crossed the Rhine River into Germany in March 1945. One month later they were approaching Germany's capital city of Berlin.

On the Eastern Front, Soviet troops were also moving rapidly toward Germany. In July 1943, the largest tank battle of the war, the **Battle of Kursk**, was fought about 300 miles south of Moscow. The Soviets challenged this instance of German Blitzkrieg by successfully holding their defensive position and then counterattacking. The Soviets then made rapid progress through the Ukraine and the Baltic States in 1944. After taking control of Warsaw, Poland, in January 1945, the Soviets moved on to Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria. In April 1945, they advanced on Berlin.

Victory in Europe Hitler spent the war's final days hiding in a bunker, a fortified underground shelter, in Berlin. Although the country was falling apart, he continued to live under the delusion that somehow Germany would triumph. The end came on April 30, 1945, when Hitler committed suicide. His ally Mussolini had been killed by members of the Italian resistance two days before. After Hitler's death, members of Germany's High Command acknowledged that continuing the war would be futile. In the first days of May, Germany surrendered to the Allies. May 8, 1945, marked the official end of the war in Europe and was designated as Victory in Europe Day or **V-E Day**.

Victory over Japan In early 1945, U.S. forces captured the islands of Okinawa and Iwo Jima and prepared to attack the Japanese mainland. In March 1945, U.S. troops fire-bombed Tokyo, killing about 100,000 people and leaving about a million others homeless. Although the island-hopping campaign had weakened Japan's hold on the Pacific, the emperor was not ready to surrender. The United States was beginning to consider the costs of invading the Japanese homeland, which it feared might lead to enormous Allied casualties. Despite initial hesitations about using nuclear weapons, President Truman ordered the U.S. Army Air Force to drop the first atomic bomb on the Japanese city of **Hiroshima** on August 6, 1945. The nuclear age had begun. Three days later, a second bomb was dropped on **Nagasaki**, resulting in an estimated total of 140,000 Japanese civilian deaths. The months of Allied victories, combined with these devastating nuclear attacks, caused Japan to surrender unconditionally on August 14. Truman designated September 2, the day of the formal surrender ceremonies, as Victory over Japan Day or **V-J Day**.

Consequences of World War II

World War II was the bloodiest war in human history. It resulted in the deaths of around 75 million people, two-thirds of whom were civilians. As later topics explain, it changed how people thought about racism, colonial empires, and international relations. Further, it provided the context for a fierce ideological battle between the United States and the Soviet Union that would shape global affairs for the following five decades.

KEY TERMS BY THEME

GOVERNMENT: War

Vichy

Lend-Lease Act

Battle of Britain

Siege of Leningrad

Pearl Harbor

Battle of El Alamein

Battle of Stalingrad

Battle of the Coral Sea

Battle of Midway Island

Guadalcanal

island-hopping

D-Day

Battle of the Bulge

Battle of Kursk

V-E Day

Hiroshima

Nagasaki

V-J Day

GOVERNMENT: Treaties

Nonaggression Pact

Destroyers-for-Bases

Agreement

Atlantic Charter

GOVERNMENT: Leaders

Winston Churchill

Erwin Rommel

Douglas MacArthur

TECHNOLOGY: Warfare

blitzkrieg

Luftwaffe

aircraft carriers

Mass Atrocities

Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?

—German Führer Adolf Hitler (August 22, 1939)

Essential Question: What were the causes and consequences of mass atrocities from 1900 to the present?

The deaths of fighting forces in the two world wars were only part of the total casualties. Genocide, ethnic violence, and other atrocities took place as extremist groups rose to power. During and after World War I, the Ottoman Empire, ruled by a clique of “Young Turks” who were disturbed by the continuing decline of Ottoman power, perpetrated the Armenian genocide in which some 1.5 million Armenians died. As Adolf Hitler implemented the Holocaust, he referred to the Armenian annihilation as a reminder of how little the Nazis need fear for the systematic murder of six million Jews.

Ethnic atrocities did not end after World War II. Dictator Pol Pot wanted to “purify” Cambodian society along racial, social, and political lines, resulting in the deaths of 1.6 to 1.8 million Cambodians. (See Topic 8.6.) And in Rwanda, the majority Hutu government directed mass slaughter of the Tutsi minority.

Atrocities in Europe and the Middle East

After three years of a bloody stalemate, the United States entered World War I in 1917, despite considerable popular protests in the United States against American involvement. By the summer of 1918, when U.S. forces were in place in Europe, U.S. actions helped push the war in the Allies’ favor. Allied advances against the Central Powers forced Germany to surrender on November 11, 1918, which became known as **Armistice Day**.

Between 8 million and 9 million soldiers died in the war, with more than 21 million wounded. In France, Germany, Russia, and Austria-Hungary, fewer than half of all young men who fought for their countries returned physically unharmed. Soldiers who did return often bore emotional scars.

Civilian casualties were harder to record, but estimates range anywhere from 6 million to 13 million. This was one of the first modern wars where civilians were considered legitimate targets. Although the Allies’ propaganda often exaggerated accounts of atrocities, reports of German soldiers raping women and killing families during their march through Belgium were common.

World War I Casualties				
Country	Alliance	Dead (in millions)	Wounded (in millions)	Imprisoned (in millions)
Germany	Central Powers	1.8	4.2	0.6
Russia	Allies	1.7	5.0	0.5
France	Allies	1.4	3.0	0.5
Austria-Hungary	Central Powers	1.2	3.6	0.2
Great Britain	Allies	0.9	2.1	0.2
Italy	Allies	0.5	1.0	0.5
Turkey	Central Powers	0.3	0.4	Not known
United States	Allies	0.1	0.2	Fewer than 0.05

Armenian Genocide The most shocking example of such atrocities were the deaths of between 600,000 and 1.5 million **Armenians** in Turkey. This action has been called the 20th century's first **genocide**, the attempted killing of a group of people based on their race, religion, or ethnicity. The Ottoman government alleged that the Christian Armenians, a minority within the Ottoman Empire, were cooperating with the Russian army, an Ottoman enemy during World War I. As punishment for this cooperation, the Ottoman government deported Armenians from their homes between 1915 and 1917 and into camps in Syria and what is today Iraq. Many Armenians died from starvation, disease, or exposure to the elements. Turkish troops executed others. Armenians have argued that the deaths were genocide. The Turkish government has said the deaths were the result of actions of war, ethnic conflicts, and disease, not genocide. (Connect: Create a graphic organizer comparing the Armenian genocide with the Nazis' extermination of millions of Jews. See Topic 7.6.)

Pandemic Disease

War-related deaths continued past Armistice Day in the form of an **influenza epidemic**. Under peacetime circumstances, a virulent disease might devastate a concentrated group of people in a particular region. However, in 1918, millions of soldiers were returning home as the war ended. As they did, they had contact with loved ones and friends, thereby spreading the flu. In 1919, the epidemic became a **pandemic**, a disease prevalent over a large area or the entire world, killing 20 million people in Europe, the United States, and elsewhere. India alone may have lost 7 million people to the disease.

The worldwide spread of the disease was another sign that while nationalism remained a powerful political force, improvements in transportation were creating a global culture that would create global challenges. Whether people could create effective international responses was unclear.

Suffering and Famine

A more intangible casualty of the war was the loss of a sense of security and hopefulness. The term **Lost Generation**, first used to describe American expatriate writers living in Paris after the war, came to be used more broadly to describe those suffering from the shock of the war. World War I was the bloodiest war thus far in history. It resulted in tremendous suffering and death for both military personnel and civilians.

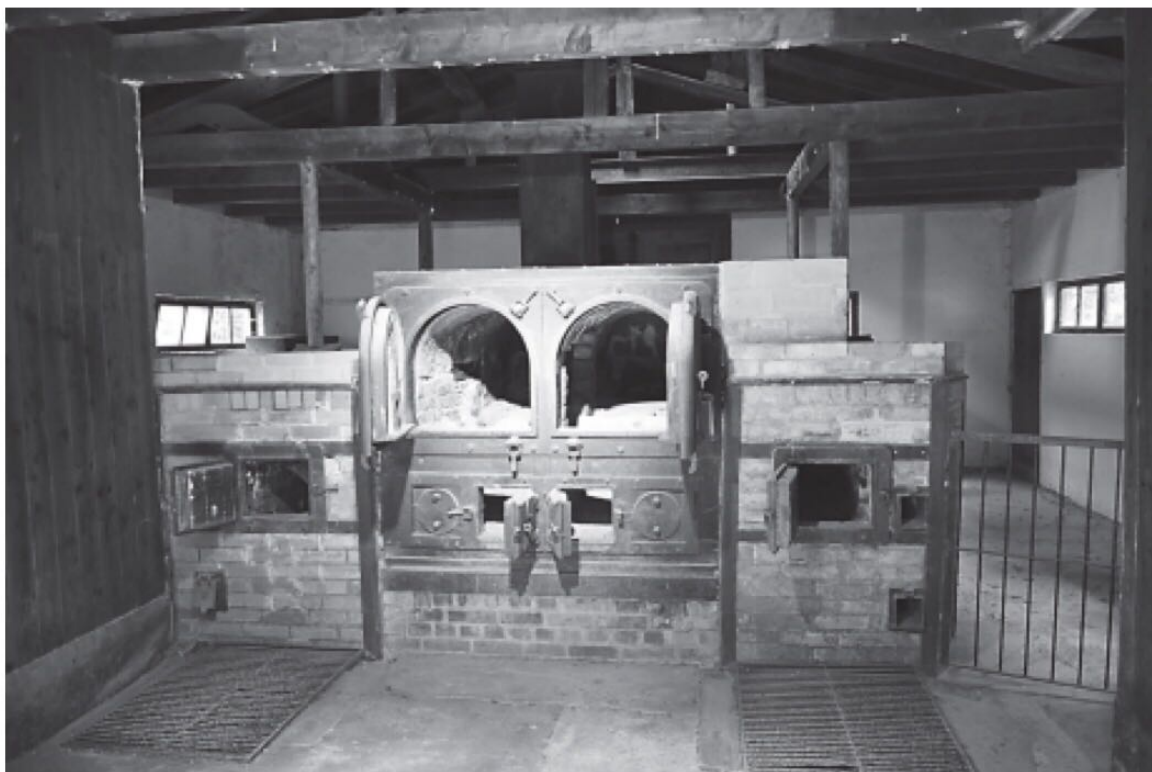
Famine in the Ukraine In the Soviet Union, peasants strongly resisted Stalin's collectivization of agriculture. They hid or destroyed their crops and killed their livestock rather than turning them over to state control. This led to famines from human action rather than by weather or crop failures. The famines in 1932 and 1933 were especially devastating in the Ukraine, one of the Soviet Union's most fertile farming regions. An estimated 7 million to 10 million peasants died as a result of these famines. The government took much of the crops that were grown to feed industrial workers or to use for industry. Although peasants starved, industry grew.

Casualties of World War II

Because of the widespread fighting, advances in the technology of destruction, and its impact on the economies and civilian life of so many nations, the effects of World War II were unprecedented. Although exact casualty figures have been impossible to determine, total deaths probably numbered 40 million to 50 million. Maybe half of those were citizens of the Soviet Union, and millions of others were from Germany, Poland, China, and Japan. Losses among U.S. troops were fewer, but still considerable: about 290,000 soldiers killed and more than 600,000 wounded. Civilian casualties from attacks on land, air, and sea; from government executions based on political rationales, including genocide; and from disease and starvation caused by the war likely exceeded military casualties.

The Nazis During the war, the world gradually learned about Nazi brutality. In its pursuit of territory, Germany forcefully removed many Slavic peoples, including one million Poles, and Roma, also known as Gypsies, from their homes. **Heinrich Himmler**, the leader of the Nazi special police, the SS, oversaw these policies. In addition, more than 7 million residents of conquered territories were forced to work in labor camps or in jobs that supported the German war effort. The Nazis sent political opponents, people with disabilities, and gay people to the camps. But the largest single group the Nazis targeted were the Jews. When Hitler became chancellor, he instituted many policies that reflected these extreme anti-Semitic views, such as the **Nuremberg Laws** of 1935 that banned Jews from certain professions and certain schools. Jews were forced to live in sections of cities called **ghettos**.

In 1942, the Nazi persecution of Jews turned into mass murder. They began a campaign led by the SS to kill all Jews in Europe, a plan they called the “**Final Solution**.” Initially, Nazi killing units moved from place to place, shooting Jews and burying them in mass graves. Later the SS began rounding up Jews and shipping them to death camps, where Nazis gassed them. Auschwitz and Treblinka in Poland and Dachau in Germany were some of the largest camps. By the end of the war, the Nazis had killed about six million Jews, an act of genocide known as the **Holocaust**. The Nazis killed another five million people who belonged to other persecuted groups or were Soviet prisoners of war. The Nazis worked many to death in labor camps and massacred others.



One shocking aspect of the Holocaust was how the Nazis used technology—trains, poisonous gas, and ovens for cremation (shown here)—to make their attempt at genocide more efficient and more deadly.

The Japanese During the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, Japanese soldiers killed at least 100,000 Chinese soldiers and civilians in what was called the Rape of Nanking. During World War II, although the Japanese did not carry out a dedicated policy of genocide that paralleled the Holocaust, millions of people died as a result of their policies. Under the program “**Asia for Asiatics**,” Japan forced people they had conquered into labor programs. These included service in the military, on public works projects, and on farms to reduce the food shortage in Japan. The Japanese army forced women in Korea, China, and other occupied countries to become “comfort women,” prostitutes for Japanese soldiers. Because of these harsh programs, more than a million civilians died in Vietnam alone. Perhaps an equal number of Allied prisoners of war and local workers perished while doing forced labor for Japan.

The Allies Air warfare carried out by the United States and the other Allies brought a new type of deadly combat to civilians. The Allies' **firebombing** of German cities, particularly **Hamburg** in 1943 and **Dresden** in 1945, caused large casualties. The number of deaths in Hamburg was about 50,000. Dresden had fewer casualties, maybe 25,000 deaths, as 15 square miles of its historic city center were destroyed. The United States also used firebombing in **Tokyo**.

The final two air attacks in the war, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, produced not only high casualties, but tremendous fear about the destructiveness of a future war fought with nuclear weapons. These weapons had been developed by an international group of scientists working in the United States. The scientific achievement was impressive, but it also required developments in other areas to have military use. For example, to deliver the nuclear weapons required improvements in airplane design to allow long flights carrying heavy loads. There is a great difference between the planes used in World War II and those used in World War I. In addition, the widespread use of the aircraft carrier by several powers extended the airplanes' reach. Using these developments in planes and ships, countries could carry out air attacks anywhere in the world.

Genocide and Human Rights

The global community said "never again" to genocide after the horrors of the Holocaust. However, genocides continued to occur.

Bosnia Ethnic conflict drove the genocide in **Bosnia**. The end of World War I brought with it the creation of several new nations in Eastern Europe, including Yugoslavia. That country was home to Serbians, who were Eastern Orthodox Christians; Croats and Slovenes, who were Catholic; and Muslims in the regions of Bosnia and Kosovo. Marshal Josip Broz Tito led communist Yugoslavia from the end of World War II until his death in 1980. As dictator, Tito tried to suppress separatist tendencies among the peoples of Yugoslavia by keeping Serbia and Croatia, the two largest republics, from dominating the smaller ones.

After the Soviet Union collapsed, so did Yugoslavia. When Slovenia, Croatia, and Montenegro declared independence, they each defined citizenship in terms of ethnic background and religion. Serbian nationalists led by the demagogue **Slobodan Milošević** were particularly emphatic about ethnic purity. Serb forces, in attempts to dominate states such as Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, committed horrific acts of **ethnic cleansing** against Muslims from Bosnia and Kosovo, killing or driving people who were not part of the main ethnic group from their homes. Bosniaks, Kosovars, and Croats fought back, causing more casualties. Serb soldiers raped untold numbers of Muslim women. In total, more than 300,000 people in the region perished over the course of Yugoslavia's **balkanization**, or disintegration into separate states.

Rwanda One of the smallest countries in Africa, **Rwanda** was the site of one of the worst genocides in modern history. Ethnic and tribal hatred going

back to the colonial era was behind the slaughter. Belgian colonizers had treated the minority **Tutsis** better than the majority **Hutus**. The latter group resented all the power that the Tutsis enjoyed. When Rwanda won independence from Belgium in 1962, the Hutu majority easily won control of the government and took revenge on the Tutsis by discriminating against them. In response, tens of thousands of Tutsis fled the country and formed a rebel army.

In 1993, Tutsi and Hutu forces in Rwanda began negotiations for a coalition government in which both ethnic groups would share power. The negotiations were cut short in 1994 when Rwanda's president, a Hutu, was killed in an airplane crash, supposedly shot down by rebel forces. This incident lit the flames of genocide. Over the next three months or so, between 500,000 and 1 million civilians—mostly Tutsis and some moderate Hutus—were killed. Some sources estimate that casualties were even higher.

International responses ranged from insufficient to callous. United Nations peacekeepers were instructed *not* to use force to restore order. There were also too few peacekeepers to protect all Rwandans. Individual countries, including the United States, evacuated their personnel from the country after Belgian peacekeepers were killed. UN peacekeepers and individual nations failed to evacuate any Rwandans. The Rwandan genocide focused attention on the lack of leadership in the international community. It became clear that the United Nations needed to think seriously about its role in violent conflicts if it wanted to effectively protect human lives and human rights.



Source: Wikimedia Commons

A school building in Rwanda has space set aside for a display of skulls, bones, and mummified bodies to remind people of the genocide of hundreds of thousands of people in 1994.

Sudan Another genocide erupted in 2003 in **Darfur**, a region located in western Sudan. Most of the people involved were Muslim, but some were nomadic pastoralists of Arab descent, while others were non-Arab farmers. The government of Sudan was controlled by Arab Muslims. Two Darfur rebel groups composed of non-Arabs took up arms against the Sudanese government in response to attacks from nomads. In response, the government unleashed Arab militants known as the **Janjaweed** (translation: “evil men on horseback”) on the region. Together with Sudanese forces, the Janjaweed attacked and destroyed hundreds of villages throughout Darfur, slaughtering more than 200,000 people, mostly non-Arab Muslim Africans. More than one million people were displaced, creating a refugee crisis that spilled into neighboring Chad. Despite negotiations, appeals, and the **International Criminal Court** charging Sudan’s President **Omar al-Bashir** with war crimes, the genocide continued.

The genocides in Bosnia, Rwanda, and Sudan became stains on the conscience of the world. International organizations and the broad global community were supposed to defend human rights after the Jewish Holocaust. Considering the millions of lives lost and human dignity shattered, the failure of the international community appeared obvious. (Connect: Write a paragraph comparing genocides in Africa during the last three decades with the Holocaust.)

KEY TERMS BY THEME

GOVERNMENT: War

Armistice Day
Hamburg
Dresden
Tokyo

GOVERNMENT: Policies

genocide
Final Solution
Holocaust
Asia for Asiatics
ethnic cleansing
balkanization

GOVERNMENT: Organizations

International Criminal Court

GOVERNMENT: Countries

Bosnia
Rwanda
Darfur

GOVERNMENT: Leaders

Heinrich Himmler
Slobodan Milošević
Omar al-Bashir

CULTURE: Movements

Lost Generation

CULTURE: Ethnic Groups

Armenians
Tutsis
Hutus

TECHNOLOGY: Warfare firebombing

ENVIRONMENT: Disease influenza epidemic pandemic

SOCIETY: Discrimination Nuremberg Laws ghetto Janjaweed

Causation in Global Conflict

*As long as there are sovereign nations possessing great power,
war is inevitable.*

—German-American Physicist Albert Einstein (1945)

Essential Question: What was the relative significance of the causes of global conflict from 1900 to the present?

The 20th century saw significant changes to the global order. At the beginning of the century, the West dominated the global political order. However, the First and Second World Wars resulted in a power shift within the Western political sphere from Western Europe to the United States. These global conflicts also resulted in the emergence of new states around the world as independence movements ended the colonial relationships that existed in the previous century.

The Ottoman, Russian, and Qing empires that had existed at the beginning of the century all collapsed due to internal decay and political revolutions. Other areas of the world also saw political upheaval as nations struggled with both economic depression and calls for greater democracy. Often, though, totalitarian governments emerged out of these political and economic crises.

Political Causes of Global Conflict in the 20th Century

Many historians refer to World War I as the first “total war.” The war was fought on an industrial scale by soldiers from around the world, including soldiers from colonial areas. The combatants discovered more, and deadlier, methods of killing each other. Long-range artillery, poison gas, flamethrowers, and machine guns led to the deaths of millions of soldiers on both sides. The roots of this conflict lie in several main causes. A balance of power in Europe had been established during the 19th century through a constantly shifting system of alliances. However, these alliances proved instrumental in escalating the scope of the war as European nations jumped into the conflict to honor their commitments.

Nationalism was a growing force for political change in Europe. As such, Serbian nationalism was the main spark that created conflict in the Balkans, known as the “powder keg of Europe,” which led to the expansion of the war

throughout Europe. An arms race among the great powers of Europe helped to increase the possibility of war as well. Lastly, the imperial rivalry among Western nations, as well as Japan and Russia, helped to increase tensions over commerce and access to resources.

Colonial Soldiers Serving with the British Army in World War I	
Colony or Dominion	Number of Soldiers Who Served (1914–1918)
Canada	418,218
Australia	331,814
New Zealand	112,223
South and East Africa	76,164
India	1,500,000
West Indies	16,000

Source: Statistics of the Military Effort of the British Empire During the Great War 1914–1920

Some of the same issues that brought about World War I also led to World War II. Fascism was nationalism in an extreme form. The fascist governments of Germany and Italy defied international pressure and treaties when they invaded neighboring territories. The alliance of Germany, Italy, and, eventually, Japan was opposed by the Western democracies of Great Britain and France. However, it was the inability of the Western democracies to offer a strong response to Germany's aggressive militarism that launched Europe and the rest of the world into war. Additionally, Japan's imperial ambitions in Asia were the main cause for war to break out in the Pacific between Japan and the United States. (Connect: Compare the motivating factors for wars fought in the 20th century with wars fought in the 19th century. See Topic 6.3.)

Economic Causes of Global Conflict in the 20th Century

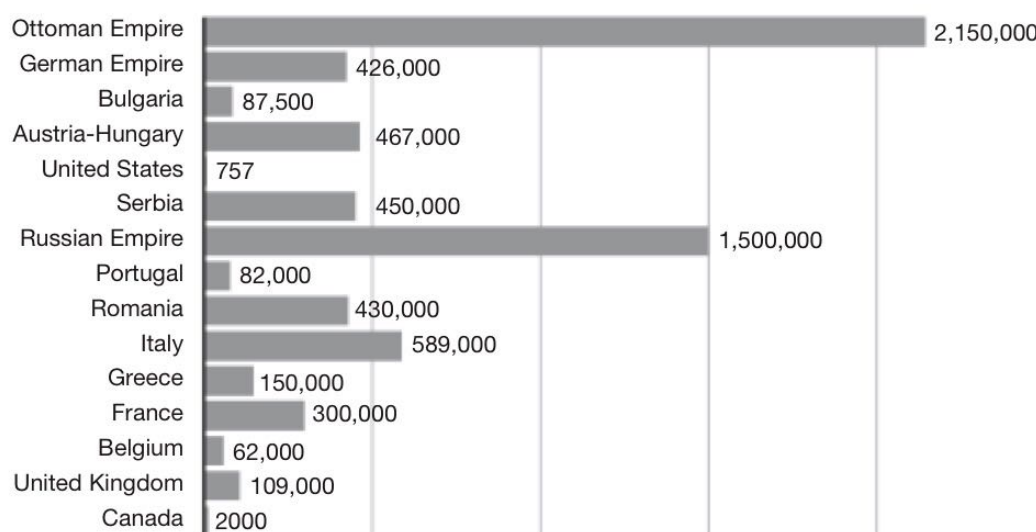
The primary economic cause of global conflict in the early 20th century was the acquisition and control of markets and resources. In the 19th century, Western European governments, followed by the United States, Russia, and Japan, began policies to take control of trade, territory, or both in Asia and Africa. In previous centuries, armed conflict would often erupt over the rivalry to control the natural resources of these areas. However, as the Industrial Revolution spread from Great Britain to the rest of Western Europe, and then to the United States, Russia, and Japan, control over markets to sell consumer goods was a primary motive of imperialistic policies. Attempts were made, particularly in the late 19th century, to prevent wars over trade but these attempts had mixed success.

The Opium Wars, the First and Second Sino-Japanese War, the Crimean War, and eventually the First and Second World Wars had these economic factors as some of their root causes. For example, the desire of Imperial Japan to take over territory in Asia to obtain sources of oil, rice, rubber, and other raw materials led to the decision of the United States (and other countries) to place an embargo on Japan that cut off oil and steel exports from the United States to Japan. The result was the Japanese decision to attack the U.S. Pacific Fleet in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, causing the United States to enter World War II. Economic crisis also helped lead to global conflict. The severe economic effects of the Great Depression (1929–1939), including high unemployment and low wages, led to the rise of populist leaders like Adolf Hitler who promised to rebuild the economies of their states.

Effects of Global Conflict in the 20th Century

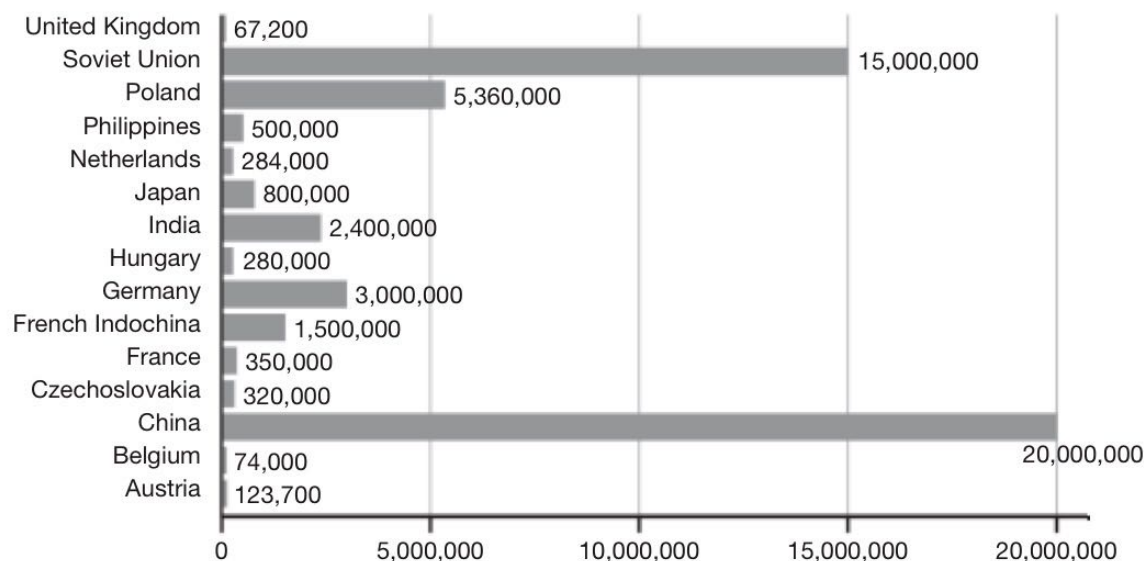
Rapid advances in science and technology led to a better understanding of the natural world and brought about advances in many areas, including communication, transportation, industry, agriculture, and medicine. States also improved their war-making capabilities. As a result, one of the most significant effects of the global conflicts of the 20th century was the immense loss of life as warfare became deadlier to both combatants and civilians alike. Large-scale aerial bombing that targeted populated areas, deadly policies that targeted specific minority groups such as European Jews, and the use of new military technology such as the atomic bomb all meant that global conflict would cause unprecedented deaths among the civilian population. In addition, mass starvation and crimes against humanity were also responsible for millions of civilian deaths during the 20th century.

Civilian Deaths in the First World War



Source: Centre Européen Robert Schuman

Civilian Deaths in the Second World War



Source: Centre Européen Robert Schuman

Global conflict in the 20th century also brought about notable political changes in the world. In the beginning of the century, the Mexican Revolution took place because many Mexicans wanted political and economic reforms. Populist movements formed and, eventually, Mexico created a new constitution with more political and economic rights for the majority of Mexicans. However, true democratic institutions in Mexico emerged and evolved slowly. As a result of World War I, regime change occurred in both the Ottoman Empire and the Russian Empire. In addition to the effect of the First World War, ineffective or corrupt leadership was also instrumental in bringing about the political revolutions that toppled the monarchies of these states. While the Ottoman government was replaced by a Western-style democracy, the Russian Revolution instituted a totalitarian government headed by the Communist Party.

Resentment of the Treaty of Versailles, the peace agreement that ended World War I, also helped to bring about totalitarian regimes in Germany and Italy. These fascist governments appealed to people's nationalism and desire to restore the country's glory and standing in the world, leading their nations toward war.

World War I weakened the colonial powers, and after the war, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson advocated for the self-determination of people to choose their government or nation-state. This was seen as a sign that colonies had the right to demand independence. Many people in the colonies also felt that their support of or active participation in the war meant that they were owed some form of self-government. When those in power did not meet these demands, organized independence movements formed or grew.

The desire for independence continued to grow after World War II, as the colonial powers were further weakened by the war and unable to afford the cost and labor power to rebuild and maintain their empires. Many new

states formed during this time. Former colonies that had a small foreign settler population gained their independence relatively peacefully, while colonies that had a sizeable foreign settler population often experienced a more violent process towards independence.

Perhaps the largest independence movement, in terms of the number of people involved, took place in India. Relying on passive resistance and civil disobedience, the people of the British colony of India achieved independence in 1947. However, due to religious and ideological differences, the Indian subcontinent was partitioned into a Muslim-dominated Pakistan (which originally included East Pakistan, now Bangladesh) and a Hindu-dominated India. (See Topic 8.6.) The tensions between Muslims and Hindus living in British India did not disappear with independence. These tensions have led to several military conflicts between the two countries since partition.

Another significant effect of the global conflicts of the 20th century was a repositioning of power in the Western countries—away from Western Europe and to the United States. Because of the participation of the United States in both the First and Second World Wars, as well as the smaller scale of destruction the U.S. experienced compared to Western European countries, the United States became a world power, playing the dominant role in the transatlantic relationship. However, the Soviet Union soon emerged as a second superpower in opposition to the United States.